Sepharad; here the direct object is Yiddish and Ashkenaz, not Ashkenaz vis-à-vis Sepharad.

We now approach the Way of the SHaS in Ashkenaz, which is the sociolinguistic and psychological basis of the Yiddish language. Comparison with other culture areas, including Sepharad, will now be made only as the need arises in the course of presentation. Zarfat will be drawn in a bit more, for with respect to culture area Zarfat and Loter-Ashkenaz are very close to each other.

3
The Language of the Way of the SHaS

3.1 Without communal separateness there is no separate language; hence the rise of Ashkenaz was the precondition for the rise of Yiddish. Small groups of immigrants become absorbed after a generation or two in the mass of the surrounding population (1.1), and thereby also lose their own language. All told, the Ashkenazim were merely tiny specks scattered over large areas of the non-Jewish world. Then how, we must inquire, has Ashkenaz become more than "Jews in Germany"?

Up to the eighteenth century this was not called in question, neither among the Jews themselves nor among their neighbors. The Jews had been a separate community from time immemorial, and so they were also a separate community in the German lands, not merely a sum of individuals. The first to ponder the historical causes of Jewish independence were Jewish publicists at the end of the eighteenth century. Historians in the capacity of publicists came after them in the first half of the nineteenth century with much more weight. Zunz, greatest of the Jewish scholars of that period, still drank of the waters of French rationalism, and strong traces of that influence can still be detected also in the later German-centered Jewish scholarship (2.13.1). When the political emanations of the French Revolution enabled Jews in central Europe to demand emancipation, the constraint to live in separate streets must have stood out as the clearest sign of denial of rights. Those demanding rights began to use the word *ghetto* with that emotional coloring which it had up to the Hitler period. They formulated the theory heard to this day: In the Middle Ages the Jews were locked in the ghetto and thus excluded from society at large and its intellectual development; in this forced isolation, both their mode of life in general and their language in particular became corrupted.

Graetz maintained (2.28) that the exclusion began with the First Crusade. And since up to that period intellectual development among Germans was slight, Ashkenazic Jews therefore never had any share in the medieval culture of Germany. Other Jewish scholars were of the opinion that long ago (up to the thirteenth century, and possibly even later) Jews in the German lands had been members of society at large, had dressed like the Germans, had spoken German, and had even

produced—in the beginning of the thirteenth century—a minnesinger in German, Suesskind von Trimberg; but later they were driven into the ghetto and were isolated politically, economically, and linguistically.

The necessity of granting Jews equal rights was also deduced from a quasi-historical comparison with the problem of the ghetto. Let the sun of tolerance arise anew and the Jews will again become Germans in culture and will differ from their fellow citizens only in religion.

Perhaps one should not be too severe with those who use historical fictions because of a legitimate political aim. But it would be too naive to accept the fictions of a past time as historical reality.

In medieval Jewish literature we hear of massacres, expulsion, evil decrees and false accusations, extortions, and so on—but can there be found even one author before the eighteenth century who complained that Jews were "ousted from society"? There is no such author and there cannot be, for up to the period of the Emancipation the Jews *wanted* to be by themselves. Compulsory residence areas began in the thirteenth century, following the Lateran Council of 1215; as far back as the eleventh century, special Jewish streets have been recorded in Worms, Mainz, Cologne, Regensburg, Speyer, and other places—and it may be safely said that the Jews dwelled apart ever since they settled in the cities of Loter.

Separate residence (strange as this may appear in the light of present Jewish and general conceptions of rights) was part of the privileges granted the Jews at their own request. Jews wanted to be among themselves so as to be able to worship collectively, study collectively, have their own rabbinical court—let alone the necessity of having a slaughterhouse and bathhouse and a cemetery of their own. The German Jewish architect-historian Pinthus studied the topography of a hundred medieval towns in Germany and in the countries bordering on it to the east and found that where Jews had appeared early, that is, when the cities had still been in the process of construction, the oldest Jewish streets were always in the center, near the main church and market—well located from the economic point of view. Jews were city dwellers; Jewish landownership, even when still permissible, played a minor role; and for occupations in the city—export and import, wholesale and retail trade, currency exchange—it was important to be as close as possible to the center of the city. Where Jews came to fully developed cities they settled near the city walls or behind them. Group settlement—religious, ethnic, social—was common practice in medieval cities and even much later; hence the togetherness of Jews was no more than natural. There are established cases where Jews *requested* an opportunity of dwelling apart, for thus they could better protect themselves against attacks.

3.1.1 From the thirteenth century on, the condition of Jews in Germany begins to deteriorate. New restrictions are enacted concerning the purchase of property, concerning trade; Jews are forced to don garments of specific design (the Jewish hat, the yellow badge, and so on). The newly established mendicant orders, who stressed Christian religiosity and the Christianization of the infidels, helped fan the flames of hatred toward the Jews. Blood libels were on the increase. Living conditions also changed for the worse. Not only did the optional become compulsory—hence, from our present point of view, the fact became a decree—but the facts themselves changed. Earlier some Jews had lived among Christians, and conversely sometimes Christians had lived in the Jewish streets. The houses had been essentially the same, of the same building material and the residential area laid out according to the same plan; here and there Jews had constructed larger cellars as warehouses. Jewish homes had been conspicuous by the *mezuzot* on the doors. Later on Jews *had* to live apart in an area assigned once and for all, and could leave their residential areas only in daytime. The greater the Jewish population, the greater the congestion in comparison to the average settlement in "the place," and the more difficult it became to meet the minimum hygienic requirements. But this does not concern our present question; namely, what historical forces created the culture of Ashkenaz. Under conditions of spiritual poverty, compulsory residence together from the thirteenth century on could have brought about a spiritual decline, and even in a community that so highly cherished spiritual values in spite of physical-political reality the congestion could have become a handicap and not an asset; at any rate it could not have been the primary creative factor.

It is characteristic that up to the Emancipation the Jews of central and eastern Europe knew absolutely nothing of the Italian word *ghetto*, either in its derogatory or in its factual sense. The accepted name was *the Jewish street* (in western Yiddish, *the Jews' street*) and thus to this day the Yiddish expression *on the Jewish street* means 'among Jews'. Quite frequently the expression was simply *the street*, and it was understood to go along with *mokem* (the [non-Jewish] town). Between the two parts of the city was a partition, but there was also constant communication. (We must not be deluded by the fact that the Germans in World War II used the term *ghetto* for those areas in which they herded the Jews before extermination; the Jewish residential districts in the Middle Ages were places for *living*.) Rabbi Eliezer ben Yoel Halevi (b. ±1140) vividly described the situation in the cities of Loter: "We live among non-Jews, and servants and maids and also Gentile men constantly come into our houses."

Apartness, but not segregation (in other words, distinctness but not

separation)—the Ashkenazic reality must be sought between these two extreme points. This can be attested in beliefs and customs, in legends and songs, in literary production; examples will come up unexpectedly. But the balance between yes and no is perhaps best seen in the social phenomenon that interests us here directly—the Yiddish language. After all the Jews came to Loter with western Loez and southern Loez speech. But the non-Jewish population in Loter spoke regional variants of German, and of this German determinant such a conspicuous part entered into the new language of Ashkenaz. This is proof of a high degree of contact. On the other hand the Jewish arrivals in Loter did not become ordinary German speakers, but fused the German element taken over with the Hebrew and Loez elements brought with them; this again is proof of a high degree of independence.

3.1.2 Together with the theory of the ghetto, sometimes intertwined with it, we encounter the idea that Jewish distinctiveness was created and preserved by the community autonomy. It is a well-known fact that wherever Jews resided, also outside Ashkenaz and long before Ashkenaz, they had certain rights of self-government, and in the preserved charters this is always mentioned explicitly. Such a procedure of delegating rights was applied to the inhabitants of the growing central European cities, to merchants and artisans and others, and also to the Jews. When the Jews became the emperor's *servi camerae* in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, that is, directly taken under tutelage of the emperor, they became even more conspicuous among the other burghers. The Jewish community had its own organs (president, administrator, warden, member, and so on are pre-Ashkenazic terms), with jurisdiction in civil cases (*bez[d]n* [court]), recognized without hesitation by the external powers and with responsibility for charity and educational facilities. The community also had supervision over the institutions, some of which were found only in the larger places: prayer house (or houses); cemetery; bathhouse; poorhouse; slaughterhouse; bakery; dance hall, where weddings took place. In addition they had administrative-fiscal obligations and rights: collecting state taxes from Jews, levying their own taxes for internal Jewish needs, and (in certain places) admitting outside Jews into the community (2.13.1). There were even attempts to create supralocal autonomous organs: Several councils that comprised not only the celebrated Loter communities of Speyer, Worms, and Mainz, but also the communities of Zarfat were convoked in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Jews have always considered it wrong to involve the "Third Party"—the outside authorities—in internal Jewish controversies, and the community saw to it that this should not happen. The informer was regarded as a scoundrel.

We must therefore recognize without hesitation that the Jewish communal institutions have played a role in bolstering Jewish distinctiveness (just as the areal separation contributed its share). But on reflection we must conclude that self-government must not be portrayed as the basis of Jewish existence. Cause and effect should rather be conceived of inversely: Jews have established communal institutions because they wanted to preserve themselves as an entity. The factor of autonomy should therefore be reduced to the proper proportions. The autonomous institutions have been supportive of Jewish existence, for in the life of a community there are functions exceeding the powers of an individual. Voluntary associations for study and charity have played a considerable role, probably not everywhere to the same extent. And in an emergency, we know, even a sole Jew (a *bar-yisroel* [son of Israel] as older Yiddish had it) can observe Jewishness; witness the Jewish villagers and country hawkers close to our times. It may be said that the true nucleus of Ashkenazic society was neither the community nor the voluntary association, but the family.

3.2 No: the concepts of ghetto and juridical segregation cannot help us plumb the characteristics of traditional Ashkenazic society just as the concept of assimilation (3.2.1) cannot explain to us the cause of Jewish association with the milieu. We shall not arrive at greater clarity of conception by modern slogans; we must endeavor to grasp the social condition of the Jews in the Middle Ages in the context of that time and its ideas. All men knew then that might is right, and Jews had confirmation of this in the Talmud: *kol dealim gevar* (whoever is in power dominates). But Jews also knew that they were in exile and destined to suffer. They never thought of having a say in the governance of the state; that the synagogue building could not be higher than the church building was deemed natural. Insults were like the sting of an annoying fly, persecutions like the bite of a snake. Evil decrees and massacres were regarded as natural catastrophes, ineluctable unless God's help came at the last minute. Such help was in the nature of a miracle. There were the righteous among the Gentiles, but even they could not be relied on too much. One can become accustomed to such a condition of precariousness and in the intervals between one visitation of wrath and the other live "normally": attend to business, study, raise children. Jews also differentiated in those days between worse and better years, and since the demands were not too high, conditions were mostly tolerable. Contacts with the non-Jewish milieu were severed only momentarily, at the time of calamity. The very fact that the Church had to reiterate its prohibition of relations with the Jews and threaten transgressors with dire penalties is the best proof that such relations continued; prohibitions have a basis in reality. Even the introduction of the yellow

badge was motivated by the argument that lacking such a mark of distinction Jews would mingle with Christians.

Of course, not all Jews had the same degree of contact with the outside world; hence the influence of coterritorial German on Yiddish was not the same among all strata of Jews. It is the task of the sociologist to establish, on the basis of the concrete material, a gradation of diverse Jewish strata with respect to distance between the Jewish and non-Jewish community. Jewish physicians, for instance, were frequent visitors in the homes of non-Jews; their competence was appreciated also by Christians. Up to about the fourteenth century Jews and Christian customers met in the marketplace (later on the market in many places was closed to the Jews and they had to wait till the customer came into their street). Those engaged in money lending dealt largely with non-Jewish clients, and surely those engaged in foreign trade, both entrepreneurs and employees, moved freely outside the Jewish street. The *Sefer hasidim* (first half of the thirteenth century) speaks of partnerships with Christians and of Christians employed by Jews. Noteworthy is the fact that foreign trade gave Ashkenazic Jews direct contact with distant lands, independent of the coterritorial non-Jewish population; on the contrary, Jews were frequently the importers of culture patterns, and assuredly also of language patterns, from distant lands. The scholars, the Ashkenazic elite (3.5), were probably most removed from the non-Jewish world, and this also must have had linguistic consequences; but it must not be thought that there were no exceptions among the scholars. We know definitely that some of the celebrities (for example, Rabbi Eliezer son of Nathan, Eliezer son of Isaac of Prague, MaHaRIL, Iserlin) were engaged in commerce; hence we are sure of their contacts with the non-Jewish world.

The lower, sometimes half or more than half declassed strata that drifted from place to place, maintained a broad contact level; these were unsuccessful yeshiva students, inferior cantors and singers-actors, *pekhotne magidim* (itinerant preachers; the term comes from eastern Europe but surely the species existed also in Ashkenaz I), and ordinary poor people. On the roads and in the inns these wanderers met with non-Jewish wanderers of similar social caliber, and they exchanged experiences, superstitions, ideas, and language.

The above quotation from Rabbi Eliezer son of Joel Halevi (3.1) clarifies that a large part of the contact was through Christian wet nurses, maids, and servants in Jewish homes. The Church sharply condemned Christian service in Jewish homes for fear of being weaned from the faith. Jewish books, on the other hand, are apprehensive of Christian servants lest they fabricate blood libels against their employers, and the authorities would be inclined to believe them. From Christian legends about Jewish boys that accompanied their friends to church and there learned the truth of Christianity we may conclude that Jewish and Christian children played together frequently.

We can understand the prohibitions; and we realize that they did not help much, for they were constantly renewed. Surely there were more cases of apostasy, but there were also cases of proselytism. Just as apostates informed non-Jews about Jewish life (sometimes correctly and sometimes falsely), so proselytes acquainted Jews with the life of non-Jews. As a curiosity, mention should be made of the proselyte (apparently a former monk) who dedicated himself to the study of the Torah and the sages of Speyer permitted him to use the Vulgate for the explanation of the words. Christian theologians who wanted to have recourse to the Bible in the original had to have the assistance of Jews; only toward the end of the fifteenth century did the humanists begin to establish a direct approach to Hebrew.

This picture is presented here with the materials of Loter-Ashkenaz to characterize the rise of the Yiddish community in Loter and its subsequent development in Ashkenaz I. In our analysis of the Slavic determinant (7.53–7.53.2) it will be seen that in Ashkenaz II Jews had at least as many contact levels with the non-Jewish milieu.

The term *contact levels* is not used fortuitously here. *Coterritorial* does not mean contact at a border line, not even a contact zone, but a contact area—the entire area of Ashkenaz (which in the period of Middle Yiddish extended from Amsterdam to the Dnieper) was in contact with the coterritorial non-Jewish surroundings. Hence there could not have been that *separateness* that the advocates of the "ghetto" theory have postulated and that is still presented as the distinctive feature of traditional Jewish society. This false idea must be demolished; there are so many proven facts of close association between the Jewish and non-Jewish community in Ashkenazic tradition that we cannot cite more than examples in the following paragraphs (3.2.1 ff.). But there was a *distinctiveness* (3.3 ff.), and this must be borne in mind.

Since Yiddish speakers and German speakers constantly met, they each had to know the other's language. Yiddish loanwords in German are recorded in writing as early as the fifteenth century. Among the minority, whose position was precarious, there came into being a specific linguistic style which we may designate as *yehudi beloy* (Jew, beware): *zay shomea* (Hebrew) *vos der orl* (Hebrew) *iz magid* (Hebrew) (listen to what the Gentile is saying) had of course less of a chance of being understood—up to a time!—than the similar-meaning *her vos der goy* (Hebrew) *zogt!*

3.2.1 Under close relations between two communities, it cannot be said that one side should be constantly the donor and the other con-

stantly the recipient. When we encounter, for example, among Germans in the region of Treves (that is, in the heart of Loter) a marriage formula similar to the *hare at* (behold, thou), or when we find the incantation *Agla* widespread in the magic of Christians in Germany, there is no doubt that the Jews were the donors. The ritual of the Jewish marriage dates from the days of the Mishna. *AGLA* is an acronym of *atah gibor leolam adonay* (Thou art mighty forever, O Lord). In the case of *ehad mi yodea* (who knows one?) there is quite strong evidence that the Hebrew song was older than the prototype of the various versions in Latin, German, and other languages. On the other hand, in the case of other folksongs or certain gleeman poems we may be sure that these were adopted by the Jews from their German neighbors. The *Book of the Pious* explicitly mentions the fact that Jews learned bookbinding from monks. There we also learn that Jews and Christians taught each other religious melodies—a clear testimony of contemporaries that the influences were mutual. It is not always possible to determine even roughly who borrowed from whom, and at times the question must be left open. The practice of immersion for ritual purification is old and found in many religions, but the concrete custom of *tashlikh* on the first day of Rosh Hashanah apparently came from the outside. *Kreplekh* (dumplings) are eaten among Jews on Purim, the eve of Yom Kippur, Hoshanah Rabbah. This seems to be a deeply entrenched Jewish custom, but Catholics in western Germany eat dumplings on fast days. The casting of Hanukkah tops and excursions into the open on Lag b'Omer are very similar to certain customs among non-Jews in Germany in olden days. One must never decide who borrowed from whom on the basis of external indications. On the first eve of Rosh Hashanah carrots (*mern*) are eaten in Ashkenaz II, linked with the homonym *mern* (multiply), and the prayer "May our merits multiply." In Ashkenaz I it was a firm custom to eat cabbage (in German, *Kohl*) with water on Hoshanah Rabbah, for a prayer for that day begins with the Hebrew words *kol mevaser* (a voice announcing). The associations seem so Jewish that at first one cannot even conceive of borrowing from outside. A comparative analysis, however, leads to the conclusion that only *Kaul mit vaser* (cabbage with water) originated in the Jewish milieu and thence radiated to non-Jews. The reverse is probably true in the case of carrots on Rosh Hashanah.

If it is at all possible to fathom the origins in such cases, it is only through detailed studies; we must forget the preconceived opinions of investigators of a previous generation; namely, that similarity is indicative of Jewish borrowing from the surroundings, since Jews were a minority. Assuredly (and there is more evidence for it than for the above) the non-Jewish neighbors were at all times susceptible to Jewish

influences in proverbs, idioms, songs, legends, riddles, and the like. The same applies also to beliefs, superstitions, and incantations. Let us not be misled by the opinion of some Jewish scholars that superstitions came to Jews only from the outside, for the Jews were monotheists. Judaism as a system is one thing and the breaches in what is called "folk religion" are something altogether different. We may presume that since the Jews were indeed a minority (and not a prestige-bearing minority in the sense that one would seek to imitate it openly) the influence of non-Jews on Jews was greater than the reverse. On the other hand, the specific gravity of Jews was certainly greater than their proportion in the population. The Jewish intellectual elite had no illusions on the score of Jewish susceptibility to external influences. Purely matter-of-fact contacts arising from business relations or neighboring residence were accepted as ineluctable, if not approvingly. Toward the end of the twelfth century a Regensburg scholar maintained that it was not wrong for a Jew to go bird hunting, and around 1400 the MaHaRIL stated that horse races were permissible "for this was no celebration, but the acquisition of an art." That is, some Jews even approved of such "Gentile delight."

This need occasion no surprise. By now we know that no other culture development in a community is at all conceivable and that in its derivation every culture formation is a compromise formation. Essentially the Ashkenazic scholars knew this too, although they did not express it in terms of modern culture morphology (2.3). The *Book of the Pious*, over which the personality of Judah the Pious hovers, declares unequivocally: "As the behavior of the non-Jews so is the behavior of the Jews in most places. For instance, where the non-Jews are lax in sexual matters, the Jews born in that town will be similarly so." Gentile ways may easily deflect one from the Jewish way, *the proper path*, and that is the reason they were feared: it is indeed difficult to maintain equilibrium when walking a tightrope. But it must be said that the traditional books discuss this subject to a much lesser extent than, say, the modern nationalist writers, who are constantly on guard lest "assimilation" creep in. We must conclude that traditional Ashkenaz was not so much dominated by the negative approach of self-segregation as by the positive approach of Jewishness.

3.2.2 The relative ease in relations with the surroundings, in transmitting its own cultural possessions and adapting alien ones, Ashkenaz inherited from earlier Jewish culture formations. The process begins as early as in biblical times (2.5 ff.), and becomes conspicuous in the times of the Mishna and the Gemara. The Gemara abounds in outside influences, but the focus is an internal one: the sages of the Talmud addressed themselves to Jews; they sought no motivations for the sake

of Gentiles (3.6.1). This is truly the Way of the SHaS. The very language of the holy Gemara came originally to the Jews from outside, together with a wealth of other culture patterns that came from the Persians, Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans.

In the last centuries of antiquity, when Christianity already dominated the Occident, contacts between Jews and their neighbors continued. The contacts led to the adoption of culture patterns and the adoptions both among Jews and among Christians were transmitted by oral tradition to later generations—but already through separate channels, as parts of the Jewish (or, among non-Jews, of the non-Jewish) heritage.

This has to be borne in mind when we find in medieval Latin literature of Germany complete analogies to such expressions as "in seventh heaven" or "recorded in golden letters" or to such details of literary etiquette as "my humble self" or "in my humble opinion" or "I am not out to introduce innovations." We will come to no understanding if we ask: Have the Jews taken this from the Germans or the Germans from the Jews. The answer is neither; both language communities have received it as a legacy, and the entire problem of taking over must be thrust back several centuries. At times we are amazed by the similarities: We had a Simon the Great, they had an Albertus Magnus (but here we also note the great difference; such title was not conferred among Jews for wars and conquests, as for example Carolus Magnus [Charlemagne]). To the name *Meor hagola* (Luminary of the Diaspora) the non-Jews have an equivalent *lumen ecclesiae* (Luminary of the Church). The very symbol of Jewish tradition, the golden chain, is found in a Middle Latin item *aurea catēna*.

For Ashkenaz there did not even arise the question if this was not, God forbid, going in the ways of the Gentiles. Everything Jews possessed up to Ashkenaz came to the Ashkenazim as *Jewish* prepossession, and what one didn't know didn't hurt him: that *Zaphenath-paneah* comes from Egyptian, *pardes* (orchard) from Persian, *sefira* ("the ten spheres") from Greek, or *dux* from Latin. Similarly, Christians did not ponder over the derivation of the words *cadesa* (Hebrew *kedesha* [harlot]) and *mamzer* (bastard); they appear in the Vulgate, and that was enough.

The fact of separate channels clarifies why there can be differences between Jews and non-Jews even in the case of those linguistic items that at first seem as if they should be identical in their structure. We can understand that there are not too many idioms and sayings in Yiddish that have come into the "Christian" languages, including German, from the New Testament. In a similar manner, we will not expect to find in German echoes of the Talmud and Midrash. Therefore Yiddish has no equivalent of the German *Judas kuss* (kiss of Judas, friendly pretense of a traitor), or the *dreissig silberlinge* (Matthew 26). Therefore the *Pharisees* are not *Pharisäer* (hypocrites; cf. Luke 18) and

der gute Samaritaner (the good Samaritan; cf. Luke 10) is a sympathetic figure in German (as well as in every other "Christian" language), but "*der guter shomroyni*" (Yiddish, the good Samaritan) or *hashomroni hatov* (Hebrew, the good Samaritan) would be an absurdity. But the "Old Testament" is indeed identical with the Bible. Then why do we cite in Yiddish, when someone longs for the petty pleasures of the years of slavery, *zakharnu et hadagah asher akhalnu bemizrayim hinam* (We remember the fish, which we were wont to eat in Egypt for nought [Numbers 11:5]), and in German the parallel saying speaks of remembering *die Fleischtöpfe Ägyptens* (Egyptian fleshpots)? Why do we say in Yiddish *oysgisn di toykhekhe* (invoke curses of Deuteronomic vigor; cf. Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28) and in German, with a much lesser emotional charge, *die Leviten lesen* (read the charge of the Levites, based on Deuteronomy 27:14)? Why is *Tilim* the designation for the Book of Psalms—otherwise the designation is a *chapter of the Psalms*—whereas in German *Psalter* means the Book of Psalms and *Psalm* a chapter in that book? These and similar questions lose their validity when we realize that the Jewish Bible tradition passed through the traditional chain of *targum*, Talmud, Midrash, and exegetes, and the German biblical language draws directly on the Vulgate. The root is the same indeed, but the intervening stages were different; hence the outgrowth is different.

3.3 It must be borne in mind that traditional Ashkenazic Jewishness was not "general" German life plus a number of specific Jewish supplementary traits, but a distinct sphere of life, a culture system (2.27). Jews could not separate themselves from Christians, nor did they always think very much about this possibility; but they fought shy of Christianity with might and main. "You have chosen us from amidst all the nation," to paraphrase Tertullian's formulation (2.15.1). Jews lived among Gentiles, but not with them.

In the manner of worshipping God the separation was, of course, absolute. The Jewish alphabet was the attribute of Jewishness; Gentiles used *galkhes* (Latin, the language of the priests). The name is to be explained thus: in the Middle Ages the art of writing among non-Jews was almost the exclusive possession of the clerics, and this was done chiefly in Latin (4.2.1). In the Hebrew sources the language of the clerics was once designated neutrally by the name *l(a)tin*, but more frequently "the Christian language," and at times even "the language of impurity." The aversion for the language of the clerics was transferred to their script. In the Middle Ages a *seyfer posl* (a flawed book) was any book in non-Jewish characters. The aversion went so far that up to the Emancipation hardly a Jew knew the non-Jewish alphabet; even in non-Jewish official documents Jews signed their Jewish names in Jewish characters.

The most important thing was the *feeling* of a separate community,

no matter whether the difference extended to all details. Jewishness was not filed by pattern and compared with non-Jewishness pattern for pattern. Each of the two systems was taken as a whole. The Worms synagogue built in 1175 is similar in style to the local cathedral; the ritual bathhouse of 1186 is reminiscent of the work of a certain group of builders named after St. Andrew; the architecture of the women's synagogue added on in 1213 manifests a similarity to the local St. Martin's church adjacent to the Jewish Street. The Speyer synagogue, built toward the end of the eleventh century, is in part reminiscent in its decorations of the local cathedral. Another series of facts can be cited from book adornments. In the well-known Worms manuscript of the *mahazor* of 1272 (1.3.1) there are illustrations that modern Jews, less secure in themselves, would be reluctant to include in a sacred book: not only the coat of arms of the city of Worms, but even an arrangement of towers and animals, copied from the outside door of the St. Martin church. The *Mishne Torah*,* of Cologne, of 1295, now in the possession of the Budapest Academy of Science, links up via its marvelously colored illustrations of animals with the art then popular in France and England, which reached the Germans in the Rhineland a little later. Similarly the tie between various other illustrated Hebrew books and the non-Jewish art of the period is clearly seen.

How was this possible? Apparently the context was decisive. One is dealing with a *mahazor*, a book by Maimonides, a Bible. The magnificent initials are of course Jewish letters, the people in the illustrations (thus in the Worms *mahazor*) have birdlike faces (an extremely strict interpretation of the sentence: "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any manner of likeness"). In such a vicinage it apparently did not matter that the arrangement of towers and animals was taken over from a church door. They have it and we can also have it.

Essentially, between Jewishness and non-Jewishness, there stood the *lehavdl* (to be distinguished). A contemporary anthropologist coming from the outside will have to assert that both Ashkenazic Jews and Germans help the poor, visit the sick, recite a prayer with the moribund, pray for the soul of the deceased. The medieval inner observers, who at first glance should have been most scrupulous, are indifferent to the fact that Jewish customs approach closely those prevalent *among them*, among Christians. For the Jewish observers are interested in what is happening among Jews. Charity is a Jewish trait; "charity delivereth from death," is an explicit statement in Proverbs. The Talmud includes visiting the sick together with five other things among the good deeds "the fruits of which a man enjoys in this world, while the principal

* Maimonides' compendium of Jewish laws.

remains for him for the world to come." Confession—to be sure not in the present procedure—is mentioned even in the Pentateuch. (The interweaving of Jewish and non-Jewish elements in the mourning ritual will be discussed below; 3.3.2, 3.4.)

The great Sephardi Don Isaac Abarbanel criticized the Ashkenazim for ordaining their rabbis in the manner that the non-Jews conferred the title *doctor*, and various scholars actually maintain that in Jewish ordination there is a degree of imitation. But the Ashkenazic scholars could not be impressed with this argument; decisive with them was the fact that both the terms *semikhuta*, *semikha* and the idea thereof go back to the Talmud.

There surely were mass incorporations and attempts to increase similarity, but the distinction as such was never obliterated. Frequently there were differences of opinion among the authorities on the line of demarcation (3.8–3.8.2), but a distance was maintained and we have to come to the conclusion that in the separation of Jewishness from non-Jewishness the essential thing is not the *location* of the line of demarcation, but the *fact* of a demarcation. Moreover, the impression is gained—both concerning the mode of life and the language of Ashkenaz—that quite often the distance between Jewish and non-Jewish is established not so much by the difference of all the ingredients, as by the difference in combining the ingredients and in reacting to them. Since the totality of Christianity was forbidden and separated, it no longer mattered that so many ingredients were similar (3.6.1). Even in building and decorating the synagogue it did not matter that foreign motifs were introduced. Thus there came into being in Jewish culture in an independent manner the compromise patterns, which are characteristic of *each* culture.

3.3.1 The separation between the Jewish and non-Jewish communities had to have its linguistic reflection. Considering the determinants, which provided the components of Yiddish (1.8), we note at once the great difference between them. Hebrew was a Jewish language from time immemorial; therefore it can be said that the determinant Hebrew was the bearer of non-Christianity from time immemorial. Both Hebrew and Yiddish are non-Christian languages or, speaking positively, languages of Jewishness. Similarly, western Loez and southern Loez, Old French, and Old Italian were Christian languages, but their Jewish correlates are not. A difference between the German determinant and the other determinants must have set in during the formative period of Yiddish. The coterritorial language in Loter-Ashkenaz, German, was a Christian language and, using a metaphor, it may be said that Jews have set up a special guard against such German-component items that have specific Christian meanings or connotations.

Such Christian words and expressions that no Christian language

can dispense with, but that Jews had no need for, were simply ignored; for example, apostle, original sin, purgatory, Mother of God, heathen, Holy Ghost, Host, sacrament, spiritual salvation, paternoster, and so on. At times Christian words can approach Jewish words in meaning; for instance, Easter and *Pesah*, but they are by no means direct equivalents, whereas *Ostern*, *Paques*, *Easter*, *Wielkanoc* in German, French, English, and Polish are really translations.

This non-Christianity is one of the criteria of the selectivity of Yiddish vis-à-vis the determinants, and foremost vis-à-vis the German determinant (8.3; see also 2.25).

From the point of view of the Yiddish speaker there can be at least three categories of Christian words: (1) Words that he does not need. These are associated with details of Christian dogma or ritual, which Jews seldom discuss; for instance, Passion, Last Supper. The place of these words in a dictionary of Old Yiddish simply remains blank. (2) Words that the Jew *did* need, for the concept concerned him—for instance, Host—but whose negative affective charge was so powerful that it was impossible to simply make use of the words at hand in the German determinant; consequently pejorative terms were created (3.3.3). Only in the modern period, when the emotional attitude to other religions paled, at least in part of the community (3.14 ff.), has a new series of neutral words entered Yiddish. We can now say in Yiddish *apostol* (apostle) and for purgatory we can use the neologism *layterbrand*. But even today Yiddish is still a non-Christian language; hence these are designations for outside concepts, not for those of a Jewish community. From the viewpoint of a modern Yiddish dictionary these are neologisms; but they came in place of previous *nonwords*. (3) Abstract terms such as devotion, confession, penitence, compassion, remorse, sin, and trust, which generally come quite close in meaning to the Yiddish terms *kavone*, *vide*, *tshuve*, *rakhmones*, *kharote*, *aveyre*, *bitokhn;* in some instances German-component Yiddish equivalents (*derbaremkeyt* [compassion], *zind* [sin]) also entered Yiddish. But all in all it is "not the same." A Jew, for instance, recites *vide* (confession) before his death; Catholic Christians (and in the early years the Jew saw no others) go to confession numerous times in their life. There was another reason for not taking over relevant designations from the German determinant: Jews had brought their concepts ready-made from northern France and northern Italy, and they did not particularly need new designations.

In contrast to these categories of rejection and of questionable relevance, for internal use in their new Yiddish language the Jews *did* need designations for concepts the coterritorial non-Jewish population did not have at all or else had with a different nuance of meaning. From this sphere of relations between man and God (*beyn odem lamokem*) we

mention the following at random: *shkhine* (divine presence), *ganeydn* (paradise), *gehenim* (hell), *kafakele* (limbo), *oylem hatoyhu* (the world of chaos), *oylem haze* (this world), *oylem habe* (the world to come), *yeytser tov* (the good inclination), *yeytser hore* (the evil inclination), *malekh* (angel), *tsadik* (saint), *roshe* (sinner). To these words and expressions which evoke metaphysical associations must be added a host of designations of what may be called concepts of concrete Jewishness, such as *shul* and *beysakneses* (synagogue), *besmedresh* (House of Study), *kloyz* and *shtibl* (conventicle) (the latter two being rather recent items of eastern Yiddish), *orn-koydesh* (sacred ark), *poroykhes* (curtain over the ark), *reynikeyt* (scroll of the Torah), *belemer* (pulpit), *omed* (lectern), *shtot* (pew), *shtender* (stand); *yidishn* (circumcise), *bris(-mile)* (circumcision), *barmitsve* (bar mitzvah), *tnoim* (engagement), *khasene* (wedding), *orn* (pray),—or in eastern Yiddish *dav(e)nen* (pray)—*shakhris* (morning), *minkhe* (afternoon), and *mayriv* (evening prayer), *tfile* (prayer), *tkhine* (penitential prayer), *musef* (supplementary prayer), *sider* (prayer book), *makhzer* (holiday prayer book), *kidesh* (prayer over wine issuing the Sabbath and festivals), *havdole* (prayer over wine at the conclusion of the Sabbath and festivals), *seyder* (Passover festive meal), *suke* (tabernacle), *hakofes* (procession with the Torah scrolls), *moydim* (prayer of "thanks"), *krishme* (recitation of the Shema—"Hear, O Israel"), *piet* (liturgic poem); *reshkhoydesh* (new moon) and the names of all holidays and their appurtenances; *mezuze*, *tsitsis*, *tfiln* (phylacteries), *retsues* (phylactery straps), *batim* (phylactery boxes), *seyfer* (sacred book), *seyfer toyre* (scroll of the Torah), *mentele* (mantle for the Torah), *yad* (pointer), *oyfrufn* (to call up to the Torah); kosher, *treyfe* (nonkosher), *milkhik* (dairy), *fleyshik* (meat), *shkhite* (ritual slaughter), *khalef* (slaughterer's knife), *pgime* (blemish), *sirkhe* (adhesion on the lungs), *katsef* (butcher), *kezayes* (morsel), *bentshn* (grace after meals).

The word *got* (God) and its equivalents calls for special reflection. The two words occurring in the Bible, *YHVH* and *elohim*, were considered too sacred for enunciation as early as the talmudic period. Even in writing they occur only in the sacred texts. Otherwise Ashkenaz uses only substitutes: *Hakodesh-borekh hu* (the Holy One praised be He), (*der*) *reboyne-sheloylem* (Master of the universe), *hashem yisborekh* (the Blessed Name), *zayn liber nomen* (His Dear Name). Even the word *elohim*, when mentioned outside a sacred text, becomes *elokim*, earlier also *elodim*. *Adonay*, the substitute for the name of God, became too sacred in itself, and is replaced in writing by *h'*; in conversation a substitute of second rank is used, *adeshem*, or even of third rank, *hashem* (the Name). Thus we have also *bezres-hashem* (with the help of the Name), *borekh hashem* (praised be the Name), *lemanhashem* (for the sake of the Name), along with *kidesh-hashem* (consecration of the Name) and *khilel hashem*

(desecration of the Name). Another name for God, *der eybershter* (the Supreme Being), is frequently used in Yiddish, also a substitute as a rule. (It is a German-component word, but in German there is no trace of it with this meaning.) Then why does Yiddish have the word *got* (God)? The German *Gott* (MHG *got*) that Jews found among the coterritorial German population is a word of Germanic provenance; the Christian missionaries took it from the pagan repertory as an equivalent for Latin *Deus*. Possibly the Jews too originally took it over as a substitute for more sacred designations. Later on, however, *got* assumed in the Yiddish-speaking community the attributes of nearly full holiness (3.5), so that at least some speakers feel the need for saying instead of *a dank got* (thank God), *a dank di hent nit gevashn* (thanks [be]—my hands are unwashed) (3.3.2 ff.).

3.3.2 The linguistic effects of tabu (1.6.9) go much further than merely refraining from uttering God's name. Words have a magic effect. *Der rebe zol lebn* (the rabbi, may he live) or *a gezunt dir in di beyner!* (strength into your bones!) are not just expressions of enthusiasm; they want to improve on something; *mir zol zayn far dir!* (may it befall me instead of you!) originally really meant that the speaker was prepared to take on himself the punishment that was perhaps fated for the child. Similarly, a curse can bring harm to him against whom it is directed (and basically this is indeed its purpose). Hence one must be careful with his tongue not to cause harm unwittingly; after all, one is surrounded by mysterious forces on all sides. Better not say that the child is bright or beautiful, for you may harm it with the evil eye. In the Yiddish vernacular of Vilna it was not meet to say *er iz krank* (he is sick); *er iz nit-gezunt* (he is unwell) was preferable. And if the illness was serious, *er iz shtark nit-gezunt* (he is seriously unwell) is still preferable. *Di falike* (epilepsy) is unacceptable; it is better to say cryptically *di kindershe zakh* (child's thing) or *di gute zakh* (the good thing). How far is this from the conceptual universe of the primitive hunter who is reluctant to use the regular word for 'bear' and uses instead 'the honey eater'? The *nit gute* (not-good) or the *yenedike* (others) (also substitutes: instead of *sheydim* [devils], or *beyze rukhes* [evil spirits]) understand human speech, and therefore *al tiftakh pe lesotn* (do not open the devil's mouth, that is, do not provide the adversary with a pretext) is applicable here. But they only know the ordinary meaning of words, not the contrived words and phrases that conceal the meaning. *Krank* (sick), or *es brent* (fire!) is very bad; *nit-gezunt* (unwell) or *es netst* (it is leaking) is tolerable, if there is no way out; but *vu freyt ir zikh?* (where do you rejoice?) instead of *vu voynt ir?* (where do you live?), which in Lithuania was pronounced *vu veynt ir?* (where do you weep?), is still better, for here not only is the potential danger mitigated, but the negative is changed into a positive.

The original expression was of course *vu voynt ir?* But when *voynen* (live) became identical in pronunciation with *veynen* (weep) in a certain area, the phrase in that area became tabu. The collision came as a result of linguistic factors; new homonyms had come into being. But the need for substitution arose for sociolinguistic reasons; the coincidence of *(di) noyt* (need) = *(er) neyt* (he sews) or *(er) toyg* (he is suitable) = *teyg* (dough) called forth no need for substitution. The euphemism came because of the ban on the tabu word.

Assuredly it is better not to speak of *shtarbn* (death). The entire area of death is indeed tabu; not only in the matter of mention, but even in the matter of contact. A *koyen* (priest) may not touch the dead. He may not enter a cemetery. If a father is dying and one of the family members exclaims "father may die!" or even with the addition of a precautionary phrase, "father may, God forbid, die!" another may reprimand him: "Bite your tongue!"

Some scholars went to differentiate between tabu dealing with prohibitions—*kholile* (God forbid), *nit do gedakht* (may it not happen here), *keynehore* = *keyn eyn hora* (no evil eye)—and magic that seeks to compel the mysterious forces to come to aid: *im yirtse hashem* (God willing), *aza yor oyf mir* (may my year be such), *oyf ale yidishe kinder gezogt gevorn* (may this happen to all Jewish children!).

The affective charge of the precautionary words and the compelling words varies in different periods; and in the modern era, with people of divergent sociocultural strata. When a guest asks the hostess, "What is this?" he does not mean the name of the dish; he wants to know what benediction to pronounce over the food. I do not want to go wrong, *kholile* (God forbid), in the benediction, he thinks; and for him the precautionary word has the full weight of its meaning. But when one says about someone, "He is no poor man, *kholile*," the meaning has paled; the equivalent is no longer "God forbid," but rather "have no illusions" or "may it never be worse." This paling is a detailed case of neutralization (3.15). In this case it means formalization: the erstwhile fully significant linguistic item became vestigial, and can be completely omitted. In other words, with respect to emotional charge the same linguistic item can be on a sliding scale (3.15).

For some items, such as *got zol oyshitn* (Heaven guard us!), *im yirtse hashem* (God willing), *keynehore* (no evil eye), *asuse! tsu gezunt* (when someone sneezes), it is easy to find parallels in non-Jewish languages. But there are words and phrases that are truly idiomatic; for instance, *er iz alt finf un zibetsik yor, biz hundert un tsvantsik* (he is seventy-five [may he live] to one hundred and twenty) or the way of counting a *minyen* (prayer quorum): *nit eyns, nit tsvey, nit dray* (not one, not two, not three). There is no analogy among the coterritorial non-Jewish communities

of the practice to give (or add to the name of) a tenderly guarded or seriously sick child a name such as *alter*, *alte* (old), *zeydl* (grandfather), *bobl* (grandmother), *zundl* (sonny), *kadish* (male heir), and so on. But analogy or no analogy, the Yiddish lexical items and the conceptions underlying them belong to the Jewish culture system and can be understood only in the totality of this system.

3.3.2.1 The euphemisms discussed previously were euphemisms because of fear: rather than use precautionary words such as *kholile* the speaker prefers substitutes. Instead of saying *er iz krank nit far dir gedakht* (he is sick, may this never happen to you) it is better to say *er iz nit-gezunt* (he is unwell). (The scrupulous may add to the second sentence the precautionary formula on the principle that doubly safe is safer.) But there may be euphemisms for other reasons. They need not necessarily be motivated by principles of Jewishness; in a social system dominated by Jewishness it is quite natural that basically neutral concepts should also assume the environmentally conditioned, that is, the "Jewish," linguistic garb.

One category deals with what is called polite manners. If it is necessary to say something that may not please the interlocutor, it is good to preface it with *ir vet mir moykhl zayn* (you will excuse me). It is customary in some circles, when interrupting a speaker, to say: *ikh shlog aykh iber di reyd—ir zolt hobn nakhes un freyd* (I break in on your words—may you greatly rejoice). Similarly, etiquette teaches to refrain from coarse expressions. One is not *geleymt* (paralyzed) but "he lies *banazamen*" (motionless). *Kile* (hernia) is vulgar; the permissible designation is *vinklbrokh* (rupture, Warsaw). The physician asks, *ir hot shoyn gehat dem mogn?* (have you had a bowel movement, Vilna?). If there is no way out and one must utter the word that is not refined, it is customary to add, *ikh bet iber ayer koved* (begging your pardon).

Some believe that an ardent Hassid must wear his prayer belt as low as possible, for thereby he reduces the scope of the material sphere. The designations for certain anatomical parts and physiological acts exist in several parallel series, and the difference between the vulgarian and the "refined Jew" is not in the latter's ignorance of the words; under certain affective conditions such a word can even escape from his lips; but generally he avoids it, using veiled expressions. Not *es shtinkt* but *s'hot a shlekhten reyekh* (there is an unpleasant odor), or even more vaguely, *s'hert zikh. (Der) optrit* (restroom) is in itself a euphemism, but *besakise* (water closet) is perhaps even more refined. A certain part of the anatomy is *(di) mekhile* (pardon) or *(der) beelef mekhiles* (a thousand pardons). Diarrhea is also designated *loyfenish* (running); Eliyohu Bokher in his *Bove-bukh* used the word *hilekh* (walk).

The sexual sphere with its organs and functions comes under an

especially heavy ban, and it is likely that going back far enough in cultural history we shall realize that the motivating force of linguistic developments was not the sense of modesty, but the fear of evil spirits (3.3.2). It is permissible to say about a woman that she is *trogedik* or *meuberes* (pregnant), but it is not nice. Possibly for this reason the Maskilim introduced a "loftier" word, from the German, *shvanger*, and today the medicodemographic term for pregnancy is *shvangershaft*. "Refined Jews," however, say that a woman is *oyf der tsayt* (expectant); in her last months she is in the *hoykhe khadoshim* (high months). Menstruation is *(der) gast* (the guest) or *(der) yontef* (the medical term is mostly [*di*] *monatlekhe* [monthly]), and even the veiled expressions are spoken in a whisper.

Reviewing the entire area of modest language and euphemism, it becomes evident that the identity with the German determinant is not overly close. A general assertion cannot replace a detailed study, but it can be said that for the intimate sphere the Jewish community in large measure created its own terminology.

3.3.3 In language the principle of differentiation manifests itself most clearly in that category of vocabulary designated *lehavdl loshen* (differentiation language): there are words applied to Jews (or even neutrally, when no differentiation is intended), and these have a parallel series that has to begin with a derogatory connotation or one of disgust. In the first place, mention should be made of the word *goy*. It does not matter that in biblical Hebrew it means 'nation', both Jewish and non-Jewish, and that *goy kadosh* (holy nation) was applied only to Jews. Beginning with the talmudic period *goy*, through an extension of meaning, was no longer a generic name but a specific to designate 'non-Jew', to which a new feminine form was coined *goye* (a gentile woman). Ashkenaz added to this the forms *goyete*, *goyish(k)*, *goyishkeyt*, *goyets*, and so on. The word *sheygets* (gentile lad) is similar. (The ancestor is the Hebrew *shekez*. In Leviticus, where it occurs frequently, it is rendered 'a detestable thing'; in the plural *shkotsim* the etymology is still more conspicuous.) *Shekez* ~ *shekazim* with the same meaning as Yiddish *sheygets* ~ *shkotsim* occurs occasionally in Hebrew texts outside Ashkenaz; has the word penetrated Jewish spoken languages besides Yiddish? The feminine form *shikse* (spelled *šḳṣh*) is very rare in Hebrew texts and is apparently not used outside Ashkenaz.

In the case of *tifle* (Christian house of prayer) we have again a differentiating word that apparently had its origin in the boundaries of Ashkenaz. *Tiflah* occurs once in Jeremiah (23:13) and twice in Job (1:22 and 24:12) in the meaning of 'unseemliness'. In the Talmud and later writings (together with *tifles*) the meaning is 'tastelessness, vanity'. But neither Yahudic nor Dzhudezmo has the designation *bet-tiflut* (church).

It occurs for the first time in the Ashkenazic *Sefer hasidim* in the thirteenth century, and *tifle* with the same meaning is still younger, the oldest known instance is in the Cambridge Yiddish Ms. (1.3.1), dated 1382. Nor are there any instances outside Ashkenaz, either in Hebrew or in the immediate Jewish languages, for *khoge* (Christian holiday). In the Bible (Isaiah 19:17) the word means 'terror'; the oldest instance of today's Yiddish meaning is found in the writings of the MaHaRIL in Mainz-Worms around 1400.

We can now sense a difference in the pattern of *lehavdl loshen* (differentiation language). In the case of *sheygets* (*shekez*) we have found *cross-translation*. In such derogations as *fokerl* (< *foterl* [little father]), *mukerl* (< *muterl* [little mother]), *zokhtre* (< *tokhter* [daughter], with support in *zokh* [disease]), *brugele* (< *bruder* [brother]), *khaslere* (< *khasene* [wedding]) we see *deformation:* similarly in the western Yiddish instances *shmist boym* (Christmas tree) (from Burgenland, cf. German *Christbaum*), *shmari* (Christ's mother) (from Alsace, cf. Maria). In these cases of deformation the base words are normal words. The prank consists of introducing a certain sound change (8.8.2). In the case of *tifle*, *khoge* the derogatory effect is achieved by means of a more complicated mechanism. The deformation is here based on the existence of two similar sounding but semantically totally different words in the Hebrew determinant: *tefilah* ~ *tiflah*, *hag* ~ *haga*. In both these words we have no new ad hoc coinages, but conferring of new meaning on old words. It is to be understood that only the concrete words are Ashkenazic. As far back as the Talmud, *ʾydyhm* (their holiday) is deformed into *ʾydyhm* (their misfortune).

The psychological background of this entire category of linguistic items is far from simple. The basic principle is apparently that of *conspicuous change;* it is all a matter of the proper context. Even in the domain of Jewishness proper, differences must be maintained; for instance, between the weekdays and the Sabbath, the Sabbath and the festivals (3.5). This is surely so in the case of the difference Jews ~ non-Jews. It begins with partition. "Theirs" is different from "ours." And since "ours" is a priori better than "theirs," there is in the word that designates "theirs" always an element of derogation or disparagement: either in the earlier content of the word that was endowed with a new contentual charge (for instance, *shekez* [detestation] > *sheygets* [non-Jewish lad]) or in the very fact of deformation (*khaslere*, for instance, means nothing by itself, but it is a recognizable deformation of *khasene* and hence not respectable). However, since the difference between "ours" and "theirs" is expressed in two different words, the words within "their" domain can vary in their affective coloration—from bitterness to quasi neutrality. In the aforementioned Cambridge Ms.,

in which *tifle* occurs several times, one instance gives food for thought. Within five lines (p. 61) we are told that the queen had to go to the *tifle* and then that she had to go to the *kirkhn*, without the slightest distinction in meaning, or even in nuance. *Tifle* in this text is the designation for a Christian place of worship, just as *metshet* (mosque) is for a Mohammedan, and that is all. If for example, we were told that there was anti-Jewish agitation in the church, the word *tifle* would have a definitely negative emotional charge.

Another illustration. "*Shkotsim* have thrown rocks" must call forth in the hearer a more intensive negative emotion than "the Jewish villager's boy is playing with *shkotsim*," and a *sheygets* can also be a Jewish boy who has the audacity to resist and is not impressed with the authority of an older person. In the case of "*tsurik sheygets gilt nit!*" it is no trick to answer *sheygets!* with "You yourself are a *sheygets!*" In *oyssheygetsn* (scold), *sheygats*, *shkots*, *shkotseray*, *shikslke*, and the like there is no trace of snobbishness as far as feeling is concerned, although we know that historically the point of departure in associating the word with this meaning was the desire to degrade or at least to disparage. A new scale of values has entered in these cases. In other words, the intensity of feeling the full significance of the differentiation language depends on the conditions and the speaker. When Jewish housewives prepare a dish known as *shkotsimlekh*, there is not a trace of aversion in the association and one can no longer speak of language snobbishness.

Since the rise of the secular sector (3.14) the function of the differentiation language became even more variable, more dependent on the situation and the linguistic context. All in all, among very large parts of the community the entire category of differentiation language is now no longer in vogue, except for special purposes of stylization. In the traditional sector, however, and (up to the split) in the still integral traditional society there were also countless nuances in the connotations of the differentiation language, depending on the object, subject, and mood of the subject at the time of speaking or writing. However, it is a basic fact of the language that it has a differentiation language.

3.4 Since Hebrew is the oldest linguistic garb of Jewishness and to a large extent has also later maintained this function (4.1–4.26), it is quite natural that in the illustrations of the Jewishness lexicon the Hebrew component is so strongly represented. It is apparently so clear. Bread was eaten by both Jews and non-Jews, hence Yiddish could take over from the German determinant *broyt* (bread; cf. MHG *brôt*); but *hallah* had to be set aside only among Jews; therefore the word is from the Hebrew component. Ultimately the word came to be applied to the white bread eaten on the Sabbath and festivals. Similarly *rimen* (strap; cf. MHG *rieme*), but *retsue* of the phylacteries; *kayen* (chew; cf. MHG

kiuwen), but *maale-geyre; meser* (knife), but *khalef; zuntik* (Sunday), *montik* (Monday), and so on, but *shabes* (Sabbath). But we have also seen words of Loez component in the domain of Jewishness (*bentshn* [grace after meals], *orn* [pray]); *shul* (synagogue), of Loez derivation (2.14.1.1), occurs more frequently and sounds much cozier than *bethakneset*. The symbolic significance of circumcision in determining membership of a male in the Jewish fold is far more directly expressed in the German-component term *yidishn* than in *mal(e)n, mal(e) zayn*, where the Hebrew-component element has retained a vestige of the original Hebrew meaning. *Khasene* (wedding) must have been in the Yiddish lexicon from the beginning, but in the older Yiddish literature the synonym *°brayleft* is widespread, which has a medieval German ancestor, cf. MHG *brûtlouft*. We can also cite many such phrases as *iberzen* (check) *di mezuzes; oprikhtn* (or *praven*) (conduct) *dem seyder* (the Passover festive meal); *zogn tilim* (recite psalms); *ayngebn, aynheybn* (put back), *oysheybn* (take out) *a seyfer-toyre* (a scroll of the Torah); *leyenen krishme* (recite the Shema); *makhn a brokhe* (pronounce a benediction); *leygn tfiln* (put on the phylacteries); and the like, where Hebrew-component elements have merged with German-component ones. By way of contrast we may even cite instances where nonholiness is expressed in Hebrew-component words. Indeed there are *reboyne-sheloylem* and *riboyne-dealme-kule* and *hashem yisborekh* and *hakodesh-borekh hu*, but also *got* and *der eybershter* (the Above) (3.3.1)—all designations for God; but *khazer* (pig) is the only word in Yiddish unless we add *dover-akher*, again a Hebrew-component word. *Oysleyzn* (redeem; not a Hebrew-component word) expresses a higher concept than *miskhern* (trade). *Lernen* (study), from the German determinant, is surely more important than *batlen* (idle). *Di ershte teg* (the first days) and *di andere teg* (the last days) of Passover and Tabernacles are holier than *khalemoyed* (the intermediate days). However strange it may be, *yidishkeyt* (Jewishness) is a general Yiddish word and *yaades* is only regional—among Polish Jews in the form of /ya:ndes/; in addition the word has no specific Jewishness meaning; it means 'conscience'.

The truth of the matter is that the problem of components is very important in analyzing the phonemic, grammatical, and lexical character of Yiddish as a fusion language (1.8–1.9.1, 8.1–8.13), but is apparently second in importance in examining the systematized conceptual areas. In analyzing the area of Jewishness the fact comes to the fore that all components are subjected to the Jewishness needs of the Ashkenazic community. *All* means also the Slavic component: *praven* (conduct) *dem seyder* is just as Jewish as *oprikhtn dem seyder*, and Jewish rapture can break out in the practically entirely Slavic-component *yerusholayim, yerusholayim, gorod slavni* (Jerusalem, Jerusalem, glorious city). *Treybern*

(porging) meat is not an inferior matter because *treybern* is of a Slavic component (7.55.1). The large, many-branched Sabbath candelabrum is called *sha'bashnik*, and the word was apparently so widespread in pre-electricity days that Polish has taken it over.

The distance between Yiddish and German (that is, between the language of the Jewish and the Christian communities) appears most clearly precisely in those cases where the difference is not on the surface, that is, in those words and phrases that are etymologically of the German component but do not exist in German in the meanings under concern. Yiddish *reyn* (clean) and German *rein* are very close, but German has no *reynikeyt* (a scroll of the Torah) for this or any similar object; *reinkeit* in MHG meant only 'cleanliness'. *Opgisn negl-vaser* (ritual hand washing) consists of lexical elements derived exclusively from the German determinant, but the sum is only Yiddish; in German a phrase like *Nägelwasser abgiessen* would simply be unintelligible. *Trinkvaser* (drinking water) can be, as seen in German *Trinkwasser*, simultaneously in two systems, in Yiddish and in German; *negl-vaser* is only Yiddish. *Montik* (Monday) and *donershtik* (Thursday), as seen above, are, in contrast to *shabes*, from the nonholy sphere, but they became coholy in the phrase *ale montik un donershtik* (very frequently) because these are the days in which the full *tahnun* (supplication) is recited.

There are a group of German-component words for Jewishness concepts that cannot be translated even into Hebrew; they can only be described: *vakhnakht* (the night before the circumcision), *vokhedik* (workaday), *milkhik* (dairy), *kvater* (godfather), *fleyshik* (of meat), *farfastn* (to eat before a fast), *opfastn* (break a fast), and so on. Three of them, all very old, are worth dicussing.

The ceremony of /ho:lekra:š/ is not found in Ashkenaz II either in substance or in name, but it is documented in western and southern Ashkenaz I since the fourteenth century and survived to the Hitler period; among refugees from those places it has even survived World War II. It is the act of naming a child. On the Sabbath when the confined woman goes to the synagogue, for the first time, in the afternoon children of neighboring families gather in the room of the confined. They lift the crib with the infant three times and exclaim three times in succession: "*Holekreysh*, how is the child to be named?" Then they shout the name that was given to the child. (The details are omitted here.) In contrast to various etymological hypotheses, we may assume in certainty that *holekreysh* is a compound, where the second element is *kreysh* (shout) and *Hole* is the name of a pre-Christian Germanic mythological creature still known today among Germans as *Frau Holle* in the vestiges of popular belief and in fairy tales. Today *holekreysh* is a Jewish children's festival, but in the Middle Ages, when it began, it was a magic act of undoing

the harm that Hole can inflict on the newborn. The Jews learned the fear of her from the Germans and projected into her many traits of Lilith, but the Jews themselves originated this prevention ceremony, and together with it the designation. Two roots of the German determinant combined to form a specific Yiddish word that German does not know and the other determinants certainly not.

Even more piquant is the western Yiddish word *min(e)kh*, which is used to this day among some German Jews for that which in eastern Yiddish is called *pareve* (neither dairy nor meat). Here we have no neologism, but a retranslation. The progenitor of the word is the Greek *mónachos* (monk); in Yiddish, however, it was taken over from the MHG form *münich* (this old form, instead of the NHG *Mönch*, has been preserved in the geographic name München [the monks' city]). Whence the strange leap from 'monk' to *'parev(e)'*? In MHG *münich* also had a humorous meaning, 'castrated horse', that is, a horse that is neither male nor female; from this, probably, the Jews took the meaning 'neither dairy nor meat'. Yiddish here proceeded not from a concrete to a metaphorical meaning, but quite the contrary, from a metaphorical to a concrete one. But concerning the problem of Jewishness: It did not matter that *münich* designated a clearly Christian concept, as long as Jews had no *minkhn* 'monks'.

3.4.1 Quite puzzling is the term *yortsayt* in the domain of mourning (3.3.2). Not only does it derive from the German component, but from medieval German church terminology. *Jarzît* is the German equivalent of Latin *anniversarium*, and it means 'anniversary (in general), anniversary of death'. Modern German dictionaries, if they include *Jahrzeit*, characterize it as obsolete, no longer in use. In Yiddish *hobn yortsayt* (*"ven hot ir yortsayt?"* ["when do you observe the anniversary?"]) is a firm combination. *Yortsayt* is so well established in the domain of mourning (together with *kadish* [mourner's prayer], *memerbukh* [memorial book], *shive* [seven days of mourning], *shloyshim* [thirty days of mourning]), that it has passed over to other communities and even the Yiddish *word* was adopted by Bulgarian Dzhudezmo speakers and by Italian and Bukharan Jews. The question therefore arises: how did Jews take over a patently Christian word at a time when its Christian connotations were still fully alive? Again, *kitl* (white linen robe, from the German component) and *sargenes* (from the Loez component) were used together with the Hebrew-component *takhrikhim* (shrouds).

The surprise is still greater when we realize that *shive* and *shloyshim*, although from the Hebrew determinant, are very strongly reminiscent of the corresponding church terms *septima* = *sibende* and *tricesima* = *drizigeste*, and that in the pre-Ashkenazic tradition the institutions of *shive* and *shloyshim* are not familiar. But the new could take easily because

it had support in "precedents." Not only is there a special tractate on mourning (its characteristically euphemistic name is *Semahot* [rejoicing]), but the Bible tells that Joseph declared a seven-day period of mourning for his father and that Jews mourned thirty days for Moses. The innovations could base themselves on such detailed facts to legitimize themselves by means of a practice of former generations (3.6.1). The term *°memerbukh* (the ancestor of the first part of the compound is MEMOR [remember]) was very popular in Ashkenaz I for centuries to designate the book in which the data of the memorial services were recorded; non-Jews had no such term; it is apparently part of the Loez carry-over. On the other hand, the medieval German practice of mourning had many traits that never reached the Jews, so that there was at any rate a conspicuous distinction. We again arrive at the conclusion that a pattern (or a set of patterns) that we find in a community, and the same also among Jews, is an agreement formation (3.3) between the indigenous and the alien, only the alien too became indigenous because it assumed significance in the Jewish community and entered the Jewish scale of values.

3.5 It is misleading to use the term *religion* for traditional Jewishness. When we say *religion* the implication is that there is a sphere in life beyond the boundary of religion. But in Jewishness there is no such delimitation. Natural science, law, philosophy, art, literature—all derive from divine relations. There are gradations of sanctity (3.9), but all nooks of life are sacred—some more, some less. Besides the distinction between Jew and non-Jew (3.3–3.3.3) there are other *havdoles* (differentiations), internal ones. We have a good illustration for this. In the *kidesh* (benediction over wine) recited on a festival that occurs on a Sabbath night, we see why the term *havdoles* in plural is used. We thank God for distinguishing between Israel and the nations; but we also thank him for distinguishing between the seventh day and the six work days (here the expression *makhn havdole* came to be specified), between the holiness of the Sabbath and the holiness of the festival. The benediction begins with "He who distinguishes between the sacred and the profane" and ends with "He who distinguishes between the sacred and the sacred." The difference between *shabesdik* (of the Sabbath) and *vokhedik* (workaday) is enormous; the sanctity of the Sabbath is primary, it is mentioned in the Ten Commandments. (Incidentally the German-component adjective *vokhedik* was created within the boundary of Yiddish, for the needs of the Jewish community; it does not exist in the German determinant, MHG *woche(n)lich*, NHG *wöchentlich* means 'weekly'.) But there is also the distinction between *shabesdik* and *yontevdik* (of the festivals), between *di ershte teg* (the first days) and *di andere teg* (the last days), between *yontev* (the festivals) and *khalemoyed* (intermediary days), and so on. The *khoydesh* (month) is linked with *reshkhoydesh* (new

moon) and with *mekadesh* (or *mekhadesh zayn* [to pronounce the benediction over]) *di levone* (the moon), the *yor* with *rosheshone* (New Year) and with the *iber-yor* (leap year).

Just like the cycle of the year, so also the cycle of human life is full of designations that are directly linked with applied law or have Jewish connotations: *zokher* (male), *nekeyve* (female), *vakhnakht* (night before a circumcision), *bris* (circumcision), *holekreysh*, *bkhor* (first-born), *pidyen-haben* (redemption of the son), *barmitsve*, *shidekh* (match), *tnoim* (engagement contract), *khosn* (fiancé), *kale* (fiancée), *khupe* (wedding canopy), *droshe-geshank* (wedding presents), *nadn* (dowry), *khasene* (wedding), *ksube* (marriage contract), *mekhutn* (relative by marriage), *kest* (keep), *tnay-get* (conditional divorce), *get* (divorce), *agune* (deserted wife), *almen* (widower), *almone* (widow), *yosem* (orphan), *tsavoe* (will), *vide* (confession of sins), *hesped* (eulogy), *taare* (ritual cleansing of a dead body), *kroshim* (funeral boards), *besoylem* (cemetery), *keyver* (grave), *matseyve* (tombstone), and so on. From the Jewish sphere derive not only *rov* (rabbi), *khazn* (cantor), *shames* (sexton), *klekoydesh* (clergy), but also *bal(e)bos* (host), *kool* (public), *parnes* (head of the community), *takone* (regulation), *kruz* (proclamation), *khevre* (association), and so on; and the juridical terms, such as *din* (law), *dayen* (assistant rabbi), *bez(d)n* (rabbinical court), *dintoyre* (lawsuit before a rabbinical court), *paskenen* (decide), *tayne* (argument), *tvie* (claim), *eydes* (witness), *shtar* (bill), and so on.

An attempt is made to introduce elements of sanctity even into the materiality of eating, drinking, and other physiological acts by subjecting them to the regulations of law and custom. Thus even the material becomes dematerialized; it becomes Judaized, it becomes sublimated. When the hostess summons to the board, she says: *geyt zikh vashn!* (wash your hands before the meal) or *vasht zikh tsu seu yedeykhem!* (wash your hands to the accompaniment of the prayer "Lift your hands"); when she offers a bite, she says: *makht a brokhe!* (pronounce the benediction). The scales and fins of a fish are linked with ritual cleanliness. One rises with *moyde ani* (a prayer), in fear one says (or reads) *krishme* (the Shema prayer). After obeying the call of nature the benediction *asher yotser* is recited. Even the euphemisms are taken from the tradition: *besakise* (water closet), *ktanim* (urination), *gdoylim* (bowel movement), *(ha)shtone* (urine), *tsoye* (excrement), and so on.

Because of involvement in the tradition, frequently ideas that are essentially neutral are expressed in images of the Jewish mode of life or of the Hebrew language modes. 'A categorical no' is *loy mit an alef* (no with an *aleph*), since there is in Hebrew another word *loy* (meaning 'him' written with a *waw* rather than with an *aleph*). One can say in Yiddish "strike while the iron is hot," but an older version *men muz di levone mekhadesh zayn kol zman zi shteyt* (the benediction over the moon must be recited while it is visible) can be translated into another

language only with cultural-historical explanations. Originally *kosher* and *treyf* (nonkosher) were associated only with food, but a mother can also sing to her child in the crib "Shut your *kosher* little eyes"; illegal goods are *treyfene* goods. Over *khale* (Sabbath bread) the benediction of *hamoytse* is pronounced, and the person reciting the *kidesh* gives each one at the table a slice of *khale;* hence a bite of *khale* (or bread) is called a *moytse* and if it is hard to make a living—or, in a widened sense, to obtain enough of any article—there is the phrase: *di khale vet nit klekn oyf der hamoytse* (the *khale* will not suffice for the slices). Because the preparations for the Sabbath played such a prominent role, *makhn shabes far zikh* means 'to go one's own way'. Since every married Jew prayed in a *tales* (prayer shawl), a statement like "our town has thirty *taleysim*" means 'thirty Jewish families'. In view of the position of the Jew in the non-Jewish world—it probably began in the language of children—the thumb was called *der goy* and the little finger *der yid*. Pears ripening in the fall are called *kol-nidre barelekh* (*kol-nidre* a prayer recited at the opening of the Yom Kippur services). Of the three Sabbath meals the third, the late afternoon meal, is the simplest; hence a simple person is *a proster shaleshudes* (a simple third meal). Moreover the similes: skinny like a *lulev* (palm branch); clean as on the eve of Passover; enduring as the Jewish exile. Pages could be filled with such illustrations; I shall return to the use of this traditional imagery for purposes of irony and sarcasm (3.11 ff.).

The etiquette of interpersonal relations is autosystemic (3.3.2.1) in the Way of the SHaS, even though some ingredients are the same as those of the neighbors. *Gut morgn!* (good morning) may be very close to the German *guten Morgen!* but the reply is *gut yor!* (good year), which has no analogue in German; hence an indigenous Jewish saying, *vos far a gut morgn aza gut yor* (the kind of *gut morgn* you say, the kind of *gut yor* you will receive). *Gut morgn* lines up in the series of *gut shabes*, *gut yontef*. When someone departs with *a gutn tog* (good day), it is proper to respond with *geyt gezunterheyt!* (bon voyage!). This leads us directly to the tradition of using precautionary words (3.3.2). There may be some doubt as to whether the custom of eating dumplings on the days "*ven men shlogt*" (when there is beating) (3.2.1) arose in the Jewish milieu or was taken over from outside, but such a sentence as *Ay, kreplekh zolt ir nit esn!* (may you not eat dumplings!), a restrained negative to a displeasing statement, certainly derives from the Jewish practice of guarding against the utterance of an unsuitable remark (3.3.2). Without the *not* the sentence would mean: 'For such words you deserve a beating!' The *not* blunts even more the aggression that was already diminished through the use of figurative speech, rather than the expression "deserve a beating" itself.

3.5.1 There is no element of human conduct that is too trivial for the

culture-system of Jewishness; there are details, but no trifles. Therefore traditional Jewishness is not religion and its language is not necessarily the language of religion, unless we say that all of life is religion. Even the geographic map of Jewishness is unique. Ashkenaz II is seemingly identical with eastern Europe, but Vilna, thanks to the Gaon, the Maskilim of the nineteenth century, and the builders of Yiddish of the twentieth century, will have to figure on the map in larger letters than Vilnius, Viljn'a, Wilno on a non-Jewish map. Lisa, Kotsk, Ger, Valozhin, (Da) Mir must be on every Jewish cultural-historical map; they are places too small to figure on a "general" map. *Khelem* and *Linsk* have no interest for us as real cities Chełm and Lesko, but as the homes of Jewish simpletons. *Hotseplots* and *Boyberik* have real non-Jewish equivalents in Silesia and eastern Galicia, but among Yiddish speakers they are places in the world of fantasy.

Ashkenazic Jewishness, the Way of the SHaS (3.6.1), is a view of life and a way of life; incorporated in this system are the designations for human relations and actions. There is nothing bizarre about this. We have here a particular case of the general rule that the vocabulary and idioms of a language reflect the specific conditions of the community. We may reasonably expect more references to the sea and navigation among the Dutch than among the Swiss.

It may be said that Jewishness takes the way of religion only with the arrival of the Emancipation (10.2). For the secular sector the largest part of life became neutralized, for the intermediate sectors, large parts of life; and has the traditionalist sector remained completely untouched by secularization? But up to the Emancipation Ashkenaz did not operate in terms of religion *and* world; the culture system of Jewishness *was* world. This very day we see the reflection of Jewishness in the Yiddish language.

3.5.2 The character of Jewish particularity in the Middle Ages and up to the Emancipation can be still better grasped by examining its reflection in the minds of the coterritorial non-Jewish population. As a rule, the social-psychological position of a minority is determined by two sets of factors: how the minority regards itself and how it is regarded by its neighbors. Even when the separate Jews' street was already compulsory, Christians had free access to it, and they saw *mezuzahs* on the doorposts, *sukes*, *matzos*, the Jewish manner of slaughtering. They heard how Jews pray and how they talk among themselves. A number of designations for Jewish objects have been preserved in MHG texts, such as (spelling standardized here) *judenschuole* (synagogue), *judenpütz* (ritual bathhouse) (*p*[*f*]*ütz* is a loanword from the Latin *puteus* [well]), *louberât* (Tabernacles), *matze* or *masantze*, *treffant* (nonkosher), and so on; we can be sure that many more words of this kind that Christians knew

were never recorded in writing. Particularly rich is the collection of German words for the Jewish cemetery. If *judenkirchhof* or *juden vrîthof* are mere specifications of general designations, *judensant*, *judengarte*, *judenbërc* are more original. Underlying the Magdeburg *Judenkiewer* is undoubtedly the Yiddish *keyver* (grave). Yiddish linguistics would like to see a Germanist gather all designations for Jewish objects, customs, and concepts in MHG texts. Much could be learned by comparing them with the relevant Yiddish words and with words from the domain of Christianity that Jews used in Yiddish.

Occasionally, German writers praised Jews (be it indirectly) for their moderation and chastity. More often—as can be surmised—Jews were ridiculed for their peculiarity: there were descriptions of pranks played on them by urchins; sometimes descriptions of the sufferings inflicted on them broke through. In many respects the Jewish community was conceived of as a miniature analogy to the general society; where a bishop was at the head of the city, the head of the Jewish community was called *judenbischof*; in other places the term was *judenmeister*, analogous to *burgermeister*. Ultimately, however, the place that Jews occupied in the world view of the non-Jewish Middle Ages derived not only from the factual condition, added thereunto even the envy that the well-being of some Jews aroused. Theological interpretation played no less a role, and probably a larger one; and only both factors together provide an opportunity of grasping the picture in its totality.

When Jews began to settle in Loter, Christianity had not as yet been established too long in that area, but the theologians had at their disposal not only the contemporary or the recently experienced reality; they could draw on the age-long tradition of the Church. In the medieval non-Jewish declarations about Jews, elements of observation constantly mingle with elements of stereotype. The mere thought of the might of the Church is sufficient to make clear how the stereotype itself became a part of the reality. Not only was there no "separation of Church and State" but had someone uttered the phrase it would have been meaningless.

The world was divided into Christians, Jews, and pagans. The pagan was deemed utterly worthless, but even toward the Jew the Christian must have had feelings of superiority. Jews were accursed; they crucified Christ, they still reject Christ. Their claim to being the chosen people is no more than idle conceit. The true bearer of world history is the *Corpus Christianum* (the Christian community). The pariah position of Jews goes back to biblical times. The Church, the representative of the true faith, had existed invisibly even before Jesus was born. The Christian community can take pride in King David, King Solomon, the prophets; it was Jews who worshipped the golden calf. The revelation

of the Church came with the birth of Jesus; thereby the Old and the New Testament became one; the Jews were left out.

The view of Jews as rejected by God is most vividly expressed in the medieval symbolic representations of Church and Synagogue found in church reliefs, illustrations of manuscripts, and literary descriptions. The Church (*ecclesia*) is represented as a majestic, triumphant woman, leaning on a cross with one hand and brandishing a mighty sword in the other. The adjacent woman, the Synagogue (*synagoga*), stands with downcast and uncovered head, leaning on a wanderer's staff. Jews persist in their erroneous ways because the Talmud muddles their brain. Therefore, they are "the false," "the infidels," "the disloyal," "the enemies of Christ," and so on.

Not only was there a clash between the workaday neighborly relations and the dogma, but there was a kind of contradiction in the theoretical approach of Christian theology to Jews. Let us recall that the modern definition of Middle Ages dates from no earlier than the seventeenth century and that the medieval scholars themselves had a different delimitation. To them the first period in world history was from Adam to the first advent of Christ; the new era, the final, will begin with the second appearance of Christ on earth. Between these points there is a kind of twilight, the middle age (*medium aevum*). But in this "middle age" Jews are a necessary element; there is a purpose to their existence. As long as Jews are scattered among the nations Christ will not come a second time (this is why Christian thinkers even as late as the time of Sabbetai Zevi, and certainly earlier, were so enthusiastic about the "messiahs" that appeared among the Jews and promised to gather them again in the Land of Israel), and the Holy Scriptures in Hebrew testify that Christians had not invented the prophecies concerning Christ found in the Latin Old Testament. The Hebrew Bible says the same.

These theological notions, the product of generations of "metaphysical" alienation, cast their reflection into the workaday neighborly and business relations with Jews on the part of a non-Jew. To the non-Jew Jews were a part of his world; but a bizarre part. Even in comparatively peaceful years the Jewish neighbor must have been enveloped in a kind of weirdness. Jews do not want to eat with Christians, will not taste the wine touched by Christians—a sign of disgust, of contempt. But this is not all. Jews come and go up and down the land—are they not in conspiracy with the enemies of the Christian world? The mezuzahs have to do with witchcraft; Jewish communal prayers are reminiscent of the howling of witches gathered in desolate places. Doubtless the devil incites Jews to pierce the host, symbolizing thereby their piercing the body of Christ; the devil incites them to use (from time to time? regularly?) Christian blood in the matzos.

In turbulent times there was no doubt in Christian minds that Jews poisoned the wells, conspired with the Mongols, denounced the Christians in Babylonia to the caliph. The Jews paid in blood; but when the excitement subsided and the Jews were seen again, the uncanniness became even greater. It was one of the factors that made the distance between the Jewish community and non-Jewish community a permanent one.

There was one means of bridging the distance at the disposal of the Jew; in contrast to the ineluctability of Jewish fate under the German racist regime of the twentieth century, the Jew could stop being an outsider by apostasy. Had all Jews chosen this remedy there would have been an end to the Jewish community. But there were Jews in every generation that refused to take this way although considerable coaxing and pressure were exerted. The self-maintenance powers within the Jewish group were apparently greater. Herein lies the secret as to why there is a Jewish history at all.

3.6 The symbolic opposition of Church-Synagogue was highly appropriate for the Christian world. The church was the highest edifice in each neighborhood; there statues and paintings dominated; there the saints were interred. In the church the Christian religion showed its truth manifestly, and this was as good as proof in those days of almost universal illiteracy. The opposition of Church-Synagogue did not reach the Jews; the symbolism did not speak to them. If one were to think of a symbolic opposition of Judaism and Christianity in terms of Jewish conceptions, then it must be the *book* versus *statue* and *painting*.

Although they had no statues, the Jews did have some form of pictorial art. There were no figures of humans in the synagogue, but other figures, although scant in number, did exist. Manuscripts of the Bible and the Talmud were not illustrated, but prayers and Passover Haggadahs were decorated with pictures. Then again Christians, too, had sacred books. But the proportion in the two communities was entirely different; and the stress was primarily different. Mohammed lumped Jews and Christians in one common contemptuous designation, "people of the book," because they adhere to the Bible and the New Testament. The designation did not stick to the Christians, and among Jews "people of the book" came to be a term of acclaim, for in the crystallized Jewish conception all later writings are merely derivations of the Book of Books, the Bible.

Every way of life must identify itself with something, that is, derive its pedigree and justification from somewhere. Judaism based itself primarily on the book, and this led to very specific methods in transmitting the culture from one generation to the other and in making the adolescent individual a member of the community. To be sure, there is no

comparison between seeing and hearing, but for statue and picture to be effective, one has to *go* to see it and has to *want* to see it. Besides they can only suggest thoughts and feelings. A book is movable. A book can be studied, that is, contantly reviewed; thereby the content can be better clarified and absorbed. Occasionally books have been confiscated by the adversary. But the Jews knew that even when books are burned it is only the parchment that goes up in smoke, the letters remain intact. When the RABiYaH (first half of the thirteenth century) wanted to apologize for not answering a ritual question addressed to him promptly, he wrote—without explanation, it was self-evident—that he did not have at hand "the weapons," the books. A manuscript prior to the invention of print was a considerable possession. Around 1100, when a house could be purchased for eight to ten marks, an unvocalized Pentateuch cost one mark, and a vocalized one three marks. Two relatives went to court over a book left by a Mainz martyr after the First Crusade. When printing was invented, it was regarded as a sacred occupation, for it provided an opportunity for bringing the Torah to a larger number of students; compositors sign *haosek bimlekhet hakodesh* (he who is engaged in a sacred occupation).

3.6.1 Book versus picture and statue is the hallmark of Jewishness in general, but Ashkenaz occupies a specific place. It began in the Hellenistic period, that is, before the Destruction of the Second Temple. At various times there were among Jews those who wanted to present Judaism in accord with an external model: in accord with Plato or Aristotle, in accord with rationalism, Kantianism, liberalism, Americanism. There is a great distance between the diverse systems with which it was sought to reconcile Judaism, and the intellectual caliber of the reconcilers also varied. But this much they all had in common. They took their scale of values from the contemporary non-Jewish ambience. Such a procedure may be designated *horizontal* legitimation. The intentions of the horizontalists were laudable: Judaism is weakened by attacks from outside, hence it has to be fortified with none other than the spiritual weapons of the outside world.

Up to the Emancipation there is no marked attempt at horizontal legitimation in Ashkenaz. It (and that includes Zarfat) identifies itself *vertically*, with previous generations of Jews, as the *Sefer hasidim* put it over seven hundred years ago: "A man says to his sons: Thus I behave, thus my father behaved—so that they too may behave in the same way." The difference between traditional Ashkenaz and post-Haskalah Ashkenaz is not in the alleged traditional isolation from the milieu of the Middle Ages and the later submissions to gentile influence. Powerful influences of the milieu, we know now, were always active. But the *criteria* in traditional Ashkenaz were always indigenous, of previous

Jewish generations, not adopted from the non-Jewish ambience. *Hakol keminhag hamedinah* (all according to the custom of the place) does not mean 'see what the Gentiles are doing and do likewise', but 'when you come to a strange place, do as the *local* Jews are doing'. (We have here a sanction of variants in Jewishness itself; 3.9 ff.)

One walks on an iron bridge when he can cite an "as is written." But in case there is no unequivocal answer to the question "where is this written?" one must ascertain the age-old Jewish custom. A custom introduced by a scholar is retained in deference to him, and certainly a custom followed by a number of eminent men. The Talmud frequently stresses the immutability of a custom. The Gaon Hai wrote in one of his responsa that we have to conduct ourselves the way the eminent men of old in their wisdom conducted themselves and not change one iota. Rashi states that "a Jewish custom is law," and adds that precisely in times of persecution one must be ready to suffer martyrdom for a custom. The ReMA (d. 1572) warned against annulling or ridiculing a custom for all customs are duly motivated. (Indeed scholars have taken great pains in their quest for the motives of the customs, just as in connection with the motives of the precepts.) Such statements can be cited from practically every generation. By means of vertical legitimation the golden chain is forged: Ashkenaz is built on the legacy of the Gaonim, and the Gaonim in turn on the Talmud. The Talmud—otherwise known as the SHaS—is the point of departure: it is one with the Written Law that Moses received on Mt. Sinai. In a natural manner Abraham Our Father merges with the prayer "God of Abraham," the Sacrifice of Isaac becomes the theme of a Purim play, Moses figures in the designation *Moyshe Rabeyne's kiele* (ladybug), King David becomes the hero of the medieval Yiddish *Shmuel-bukh*.

Therefore one is not afraid of repetition; one is not in search of originality: it is impossible to improve on the eminent men of former days. Hence the titles of rabbinic books are frequently repeated. The Torah is not merely a sum of quotations, a handbook of metaphors, but a source of prefigurations. If the Talmud says "That is not an orphaned generation, in which R. Elazar ben Azaryah lives," no one needs to be surprised if a contemporary of the RABaN in the twelfth century pays him the same compliment, and the RABaN in turn pays the same compliment to another great contemporary of his. The Talmud uses the expression "we drink his waters" to mean that we draw spiritual sustenance from someone's eminence; it is therefore natural that the MaHaRaM of Rothenburg says the same about a contemporary eminent man. Even ancient humor can be actuated anew (3.11).

3.6.2 It is no coincidence that in the beginning of the Loter-Ashkenaz period there appears the expression *derekh hashas* (the Way of the SHaS).

We find it in no less an authority than Rashi. Originally it was a school term, but it is advisable to enlarge it to designate a way of life, something like the Hebrew and Yiddish expression *derekh hayosher* (the proper way); let us therefore establish the designation *derekh hashas* (the Way of the SHaS) as a handy cultural-historical term. The All High is our God and the God of our fathers (*eloheynu velohey avoyseynu*). All of Jewish history is one indivisible whole; God will help us as he helped Abraham Our Father on Mt. Moriah. The uniqueness of the Jewish condition in the world appeared as early as in the struggle between Jacob and Esau in their mother's womb, and Jacob is Israel, identified with the people of Israel, and Esau is Edom, and not only is Haman descending from him, but Edom is also Christian Europe; similarly, for the opposition Jews and Moslems we have the prefiguration of Isaac and Ishmael.

In the conception of the Way of the SHaS Jewish otherness cannot be the result of "exclusion"; it is not even the result of the exile. It derives from the fact that God had chosen the Jewish people, not to be the beneficiary of special favors, but to sanctify them from all people ("for you have chosen and sanctified us from all people"). Both *goy kadosh* (holy nation) and *am segulah* (treasure) are recorded in the Pentateuch (Exodus 19:6; Deuteronomy 7:6), and the division into Jews and non-Jews will continue to the advent of the Messiah.

In such a longitudinal view it was easy to fall into what our modern historical awareness calls anachronisms. They are indeed glaring in their number and naiveté. When Jacob met Joseph in Egypt he was in the midst of his prayer and not permitted to interrupt (Rashi on Genesis 46:29 ff.). The royal dish in the court of King David and King Solomon is chickens and fish (*Shmuel-bukh, Mlokhim-bukh*). The Way of the SHaS—like the general world view up to the modern period—is not so strict about periods. There is no attempt at exact periodization. As a rule one is content with such designations as *in days of old, renewi our days as in ancient days*. The MaHaRaM of Rothenburg is among the later masters vis-à-vis Rabbi Gershom, the Luminary of the Exile, but among the early masters vis-à-vis the MaHaRaM of Lublin. By means of this relativism contemporary conditions could be motivated according to the Talmud and, on the other hand, conditions of former years could be interpreted in the frame of reference of today. Through such a mutual reinterpretation, the books of all periods lost their character as literature (although now we occasionally use in the occidental manner the designation "rabbinic literature"). They became an absolute continuum. The "occidental" concept of anachronism becomes meaningless; if we must follow the occidental fashion then it is panchronism.

Vertical legitimation is something entirely different from the hallowing of each scrap of the past. Suffice it to recall the Samaritans or Karaites, who stopped at a certain stage in their development (let us admit that the world knows about them from Jewish historiographers; from another point of view the Samaritans and Karaites may possibly be seen in a different light); ultimately they dropped out of the Jewish community. The Way of the SHaS has, in a manner of speaking, a sanctioned constitutional procedure of change. SHaS is the permanent foundation code; law and custom regulate the life of the Jew. But even in the law there can be a breach, if the hour demands it (*horaat shaah* [emergency decision]), and surely not every custom has to be retained forever just by virtue of age: the expression *minhag shtut* (silly custom) goes back as far as the Gaonic period, and the prototype of the Yiddish saying *a minheg brekht a din* (a custom sets aside a law) goes back to the Talmud (*minhag mevatel halakah*).

Tradition, in the conception of the Way of the SHaS, is not a pile of conduct patterns one on top of the other in an endlessly growing heap. The Way of the SHaS is based on standardized (normified) tradition.

3.6.3 The tools for standardizing the tradition and fixing the changes are also specific: not courts of appeal and repeal tribunals, but books, the large derivative literature following the Talmud.

The highest form of literary creativity is the *commentary*. The authority of the book which is commented on is stressed; nonetheless the commentator can introduce his innovations. All great books of the Jewish tradition have commentaries, and frequently commentaries on the commentaries. Besides his commentary on the Bible, Rashi also has a commentary on the Talmud; and Tosafot (supplements), the collective product of two or three centuries later, is virtually a complementation of Rashi. Several score of later scholars, including the MaHaRaL of Prague, wrote books that had been conceived from the start as commentaries on Rashi's commentary. Each subsequent commentator stands on the shoulders of the preceding commentators.

In practice the primacy is assigned to the codes. It is said of a great scholar that he is master of SHaS and codes. That the Talmud cannot cover all doubtful cases of conduct is no modern finding; as far back as the Gaonim decisions were rendered on the basis of precedent and analogy. Those following them based themselves on the Gaonim too, and Joseph Karo's *Shulhan aruk*, just as the ReMA's *Hagahot* (annotations) to it, integrated the work of the codifiers of the entire Middle Ages. But the number of doubtful situations can never be exhausted; therefore, the codes literature has not stopped even after their codification in *Shulhan aruk*.

In deciding a difficult ritual question a rabbi would generally not rely on himself, but consult an eminent authority, sometimes several.

Many scholars, distinguished and of lesser eminence, collected the questions sent to them and their answers into volumes. Thus there arose the responsa genre, the beginnings of which can be traced in the Talmud. In the course of time hundreds of volumes of responsa came into being; in some of them, at any rate, the questions and answers are a mere literary device to express problems of Halakah in the form of concrete illustrations.

In retrospect we realize what a remarkable tool the Halakah books of various types were for the maintenance of the continuity of the Jewish community without a centralized hierarchy and final authority at the top. Simultaneously we have here an imposing monument of unceasing adjustment to constantly changing times.

3.6.4 We have seen above (3.2 ff.) that in the course of development Ashkenaz continously adopted elements of external patterns and merged them into the system of Jewishness. Thus it was in Loter-Ashkenaz from the very beginning. Who else understood as well as Rabbi Gershom, the Luminary of the Exile (1.2), the fact that Loter was not the Orient. He was even versed in the civil law of the contemporary non-Jewish milieu, and in his response he took surrounding conditions into great consideration. But this is only a matter of fact; his real concern was in securing the authentic, the continuous, and there is something extremely moving in the fact that Ashkenazic legend has incorporated into the meager details of Rabbi Gershom's life this one, namely that the Gaon Hai was his teacher.

Rabbi Gershom's great concern was to obtain correct texts of the Mishna and the Gemara. These he needed for the yeshiva that he had established; the yeshivas in Babylonia were too far away and past their zenith; the yeshivas in Palestine surely could no longer provide leadership; and Rabbi Gershom knew that only through schools can a crumbling tradition be formulated anew and take root. He succeeded: Rashi was a disciple of his disciples, and Rashi's grandsons, RaSHBaM and Rabenu Tam, became the first among the Tosafists.

Once continuity was secure, Rabbi Gershom could decree monogamy, and although the decree was in blatant contradiction to the biblical practice, the ROSH some four hundred years later could declare that Rabbi Gershom's enactments were observed as if they had been given on Mt. Sinai.

Rabbi Gershom was a classical "verticalist." He did not call for an adjustment to the spirit of the time, but he endeavored to preserve in the changed time a maximum of culture elements of earlier days. Let this not appear as a semantic quibble, for in both instances the new combines with the old. The intention is decisive. Vertical legitimation in theory made it possible in practice for Loter-Ashkenaz to emancipate itself from Babylonia and Palestine.

3.7 The function carried out by the books in traditional Ashkenaz would have been impossible had they been read the way books are read now. Books, then, were studied, and *study* was the backbone of Ashkenaz. The concept *lernen* (study) is so specific that it is untranslatable into a "Christian" language (3.3.1). English "to study," for example, is unsuited, for in study there will come a time when the student has completed his studies and graduates. The "eternal student" in occidental societies is a tragicomic figure. But *lernen* is a lifelong activity. The scholar is a *talmid-khokhem* (literally a disciple of the sage)—a student he is and remains. And the maximum of *lernen* is desirable. "Thou shalt meditate therein day and night" (Joshua 1:8) is usually only the ideal, but now we know how powerful the ideal norm is in determining the character of a culture. The scholars were the prestige group, and they received recognition everywhere in the Jewish world. Their acclaim was not merely local.

Whatever the society that is studied, the investigator will at once inquire about the channels through which its patterns of conduct and ideal norms are transmitted to the young generation. The various stages—the *kheyder* (elementary school), the *yeshiva*, the *khazer-bokher* (repeater), the *lernen far zikh* (independent study)—were standardized, but not petrified. We do not have as yet the great work presenting the methods of study in all communities of Ashkenaz since the Middle Ages. When we do have it, we shall find that attention was paid not only to the method of study, such as literal interpretation or dialectics, but also to gesticulation, swaying, studying seated or standing. The Gemara chant, consisting of several logically definable variants, is hallowed by tradition, perhaps no less than the cantillation of the Bible; we cannot preclude the possibility that the Gemara chant also dates from pre-Ashkenazic times.

Nor is this all. In Ashkenaz the educational machinery was identified with the very backbone of the society, with study. God, Israel, and the Torah are one (*kudsha brikh hu, yisrael veorayta had hu*). Among Jews study is not only the transmitting machinery, but is in itself an expression of piety. When a child is taken for the first time to *kheyder* it is wrapped in a prayer shawl. Children who died prematurely, we are told, are instructed in paradise by God himself. Therefore the difference between Jewish life and *theirs* was so immense. Charlemagne invited scholars to his court, but he himself was illiterate; and he was not the only medieval ruler lacking the rudiments of knowledge. Wolfram von Eschenbach and Walther von der Vogelweide, the two ornaments of MHG poetry, could not write at all, or just barely. Up to most recent times literacy in the agrarian society of Poland-Lithuania was no greater than that. Among such neighbors the word *amorets* (literally, people of the land) was one of the grievous derogations in the Ashkenazic community, and

so it had been already in the Talmud. On a voluntary basis, without state support, Jews established a system of public education, and practically every child went to *kheyder*. (The word *kheyder* itself received in Ashkenaz, that is, in Yiddish, its specific meaning of school.) Through a system of scholarships—then it was called *esn teg* (eating days; note the un-German character of this idiom, whose elements are of the German component)—thousands of poor young men in each generation filled the yeshivas, the institutions of higher Jewish learning. *Orem bokher* (a needy student), *yeshive-bokher*, and sometimes just *bokher* was the designation for the candidate-scholar. Through the preachers, through the *khevre mishnayes* (association for the study of the Mishna) and the *khevre eyn-yankev* (association for the study of *En-yaakov*, legends of the Talmud) learning permeated major strata of the common people. Among non-Jews too newlyweds were given wedding gifts, but the bridegroom did not have to deliver a *droshe* (sermon); hence there could not have been a designation such as *droshe-geshank* (literally, sermon present). Non-Jews also had *kest* (board for newlyweds), but it was a purely economic arrangement, not meant to enable the young man to continue his studies, free from worry over a livelihood. Later on, when the young husband had to become independent, the wife often became the breadwinner, so that her husband could study undisturbed.

And one did not study practical subjects: knowledge of merchandise, computation of interest, bookkeeping. Whatever was connected with the mundane world was somehow acquired through practice. Only what was concerned with life eternal was a subject of study. One delved deeply into the Talmud; one read into it all contemporary problems: problems of dietary laws of today, of family relations today, in general how to be a Jew today. The Talmud, it was believed, contains everything. Hence the rabbi was consulted not only on ritual matters, but also about family affairs and business. Assuredly, the Jew, too, wanted worldly pleasures, and among Jews, as elsewhere, money was the key to power; and all knew that through study one cannot acquire material fortunes. One can only buy one's way into *yikhes* (high status), but *yikhes* cannot be acquired for money. *Yikhes* meant descent from scholars —not from the wealthy, not from lords, not from warriors. *Yikhes* derives from the principle that *Torah is the best of wares* (8.9.4) and on this the entire social scale was based (1.2.1): *an ignoramus; a boor; a workaday Jew; a Jew; a scholar; a renowned scholar; a genius.*

Just as American textbooks once told of the bootblack who became a millionaire, so the ideal type of traditional Ashkenaz was Judah of Regensburg: he began as a loafer and ended up as the great Judah the Pious. Not all succeeded in making scholars of their children, but all aspired to it.

The linguistic effect of the study material was immense. Each thought, each sentiment that aspires to expression via words seeks an appropriate form. And here hundreds of patterns were at hand in an easily quotable Hebrew version (4.3). All the scholar has to do is put out his hand, and he actually samples them liberally.

We shall see how the growth of learning in Ashkenaz as a result of the Babylonian renaissance (7.13.1) had to bring about an increase in the Hebrew component in the Old Yiddish period. Here too the law of interchangeability (7.26.2) was operative.

3.8 The illustrations strewn throughout this chapter indicate that words, phrases, sayings, proverbs from the most diverse areas of life were streaming into the language from the pious books. The imagery of these books was alive in the student. The picture of the determinants is already clear. The Way of the SHaS comprises all areas of life, and all determinants contributed to the language of the Way of the SHaS. But since the Way of the ShaS is so closely bound up with Hebrew, it is natural that in those areas directly concerned with the traditional elements in the culture the Hebrew component should be especially notable.

Upon what sources in the Hebrew determinant did Yiddish draw? In the first place we are concerned here with the language of the Talmud in the widest sense, that is, Mishna, Gemara, Midrash, commentaries, codes, and the like. Since the Talmud is based on the Bible, we will establish a second category: Bible language. A third category should be added: prayer language, which is to be found not only in the *sidur* and in the *mahazor*, but also in the benedictions, in the Passover Haggadah, in the Sabbath songs, in the penitential prayers, and in the Lamentations. But the material from the various sources can only be ferreted out—in actual language usage the sundry materials merged (3.8.5).

How large is the number of lexical items from each source? Yehoash and Spivak, in their *Yiddish Dictionary containing all Hebrew (and Chaldaic) Words, Expressions and Names Used on the Yiddish Language* (New York, 1911), and following them N. Pereferkovitch, in *Hebreizmen in yidish* (Riga, 1929), compiled an inventory of over five thousand lexical units. Shtif, in his attempt to classify the material, came to the conclusion that there are only 4,824 "legitimate words and expressions." Better, therefore, to say nearly five thousand, for where do we find the statistically average Jew whose language we want to record? The more scholarly recalls more readily the content of the books and his language is more bookish. Similarly, the language of the prayers will be more strongly reflected in the Yiddish of Jews who know their prayers by heart. The tasks of reasearch are therefore mainly in the area of qualification according to function and derivation, although statistical problems must also be raised in a monographic analysis (1.8.2).

The difference between the approaches of Yehoash and Spivak, Pereferkovitch, and Shtif, and the approach advanced in this chapter should be striking. They were interested in *Hebraisms*, that is, in the pure component aspect, the existence of Hebrew-component words and expressions. To add another illustration to the previous: A phrase such as *kumen tsu oleynu* was within their field of vision: Oleynu (upon us [it is incumbent]), a prayer concluding the service, derives from Hebrew; but *kumen tsu oysshpayen* (arrive at the spitting) does not figure in their list, for all three words in the phrase are of German component. Indeed, *kumen tsu oysshpayen*, insofar as external form is concerned, is not fusion language (1.9) but, bearing in mind the means of expression of the Way of the SHaS, both phrases are identical in meaning. At a certain place in Oleynu the worshipper spits out; hence both phrases mean the same thing: to arrive at the very end.

In the following material, the problems of the sources of the language of the Way of the SHaS is collated. The purpose is merely to suggest certain preliminary conclusions, not to present all aspects of the problem. Given the present state of research we have not yet arrived at that point.

3.8.1 In considering the language of the Way of the SHaS the most logical thing is to begin with the SHaS, that is, the language of the Talmud, in the above-defined broader sense. A linguistically naive person among modern secularist Jews may be inclined to brand some of the lexical items as non-Yiddish, simply because he doesn't understand them. Deduct the emotional rebuff and there remains the formulation that the sociocultural stratification of the speakers must not be overlooked. For certain strata of Yiddish speakers some of these items have already become archaic. But in the first place archaisms are also part of the language (1.6.9), and even for a social stratum, even for an individual, an archaism is not condemned to be such once and for all; the boundaries of incomprehensibility, of passive comprehensibility, and active usage shift. On the contrary, surprise should be occasioned by the fact that so many lexical units from this source are alive in the mouths of Jews that have never looked into a folio of the Talmud. The sociolinguistic significance of this will be discussed below (3.15).

Here is an additional list to those occurring before: *aver* (bad odor), *akhrayes* (responsibility), *akhsanye* (inn), *androygenes* (hermaphrodite), *istenis* (fastidious), *apetropes* (guardian), *apikoyres* (heretic), *apoytike* (large fortune), *orkheporkhe* (vagrants), *ashmeday* (prince of demons), *bogris* (adolescent female), *bur* (illiterate), *botl beshishim* (diluted beyond recognition), *beynashmoshes* (twilight), *bentayim* (meanwhile), *bayshn* (bashful), *bemeyzid* (deliberately), *balkorkhe* (perforce), *balkhay* (living being), *baltshuve* (penitent), *bifresye* (openly), *barmitsve* (bar mitsvah), *barmetsre* (neighbor's right of preemption), *barsamkhe* (authority), *beshoygeg* (unwittingly), *gabe* (warden), *guzme* (exaggeration), *gazlen* (robber), *gzeyre* (evil decree), *dugme* (example), *daletames* (four cubits), *dan (zayn) lekaf-skhus* (give the benefit of the doubt), *hakhnoses-orkhim* (hospitality), *halevay* (God grant), *halokhe* (Jewish law), *hanoe* (pleasure), *hefker* (abandoned, ownerless), *hegdesh* (poorhouse), *veyshet* (gullet), *khalemoyed* (intermediary days between the first two and last two days of Passover and Sukkoth), *khokhmanis* (clever woman), *tipesh* (fool), *tirkhe* (trouble), *toes* (error), *yiesh* (despair), *yasher-koyekh* (thanks), *yisurim* (suffering), *kilakheryad* (carelessly), *loy-day* (not enough that), *lignay* (adversely), *leosed love* (in the future), *leponem* (for appearance's sake), *lifnim mishuras hadin* (beyond the call of duty), *maydem* (adept), *magemase* (dealings), *mekhteyse* (with pleasure), *matbeye* (coin), *mamesh* (literally), *mesires-nefesh* (self-sacrifice), *moes* (money), *mesles* (twenty-four hours), (*a gantser*) *mar bar rev ashi* (bigwig), *mashmoes* (probably), *mase-matn* (transaction), *nikhe* (agreeable), *sakone* (danger), *agmesnefesh* (aggravation), *oyverbotl* (senile), *poyel-yoytse* (result), *puronyes* (affliction), *poshe-yisroel* (impious Jew), *pinkes* (register), *prute* (penny), *partsef* (face), *kalvekhoymer* (*a fortiori* argument), *kameye* (amulet), *kfitses-haderekh* (shortcut), *katsef* (butcher), *ragzn* (irascible), *reshus* (authority), *shie-pie* (from hand to mouth), *shove-kesef* (payment in kind), *shum* (without), *shtus* (folly), *shibesh* (trifle), *shem-hamfoyresh* (the ineffable name of God), *tkhies-hameysim* (resurrection), *tarumes* (complaints).

The inventory of our category becomes much richer when we include—and how can we avoid it—the sayings and complete proverbs that scholars took from their books and which then spilled over in part into the language of the public at large. For instance, *odem korev leatsmoy* (man is nearest to himself); *aviro derets yisroel makhkim* (the air of Palestine renders wise); *akhren akhren khoviv* (last is best); *eyn oyrekh makhnis oyrekh* (a guest cannot show hospitality); *eyn meviin raye min hashoytim* (a fool is no proof); *eyn mazl leyisroel* (Jews have no luck); *eyno doyme shmiye lireiye* (you cannot compare hearing to seeing); *al todin es khaveyrkhe ad shetagia limkoymo* (do not judge your fellow until you are in his position); *al tifroysh min hatsiber* (do not separate from the community); *im eyn ani li mi li* (if I am not for myself, who will be?); *im eyn kemakh eyn toyre* (where no material means are available, no study is possible); *im keyn eyn ladovor sof* (if so, there is no end to the thing); *beshoo shehi loy yoym veloy laylo* (at a time that is neither day nor night); *dvorim hayoytsim min haleyv nikhnosim el haleyv* (words that come from the heart enter the heart); *day lakhkime birmize* (a hint to the wise is sufficient); *dine demalkhuse dine* (the law of the state is law); *ho beho talye* (one depends on the other); *hedyot koyfets berosh* (the ignorant rushes to the fore); *hayem kan umokher bakeyver* (here today and in the grave tomorrow); *hamoytsi mekhaveyroy olov horaye* (the claimant must produce evidence); *ze nehene veze loy khoser*

(one benefits and the other does not lose); *khakhomim hizoharu bedivreykhem* (wise men, be careful with your words); *khosn doyme lemeylekh* (a bridegroom is likened unto a king); *toyv talmud toyre im derekh-erets* (good is the study of the Torah along with a practical occupation); *yesh koyne oylomoy beshoo akhas* (there are some who acquire the world in one hour); *kabdeyhu vekhoshdeyhu* (honor him and suspect him); *kol dealim gevar* (might is right); *kol hakoydem zoykhe* (first come first served); *kol hatoyre kule al regel akhes* (all the Torah [while standing] on one foot); *kol yisroel khaveyrim* (all Israel are united in one fellowship); *kol yisroel areyvim ze boze* (all Israel are responsible for one another); *kolu kol hakitsin* (as a last resort); *kesef vezohov metaher mamzeyrim* (silver and gold legitimize bastards); *loy hoyu dvorim meoylom* (just as frequently in the acronym LoHaDaM, it never happened); *loy miduvshokh veloy meiktsokh* (neither your honey nor your sting); *loy roisi eyno raye* (I have not seen is no proof); *les din veles dayen* (there is no justice and no judge); *may dekoamri rabonon* (what the sages said); *mi lonu godel* (who among us is greater); *mishenikhnas oder marbim besimkhe* (when [the month of] Adar arrives merriment increases); *nikhnes yayin yotso sod* (when wine comes in, the secret comes out); *noyfekh misheloy* (a makeweight of his own); *noshim daton kale* (women are frivolous); *sadne deare khad hu* (the whole world is one); *aveyre goyreres aveyre* (one sin leads to another); *oylem keminhogoy noyheg* (the world goes on as usual); *al hatoyre veal hoavoyde* (study and piety); *al kol tsore sheloy tove* (in an emergency); *al menas lekabel pras* (for the sake of reward); *al rishn rishn veal akhren akhren* (in proper order); *pikuakh nefesh doykhe shabes* (saving of a life thrusts aside the Sabbath); *kereyakh mikan vekereyakh mikan* (deprived of both alternatives); *riboyne dealme kule* (Master of the whole universe); *sikhes khulin shel talmidey khakhomim* (table talk of the wise); *sheker eyn lo raglayim* (falsehood has no standing); *tofaste merube loy tofaste* (if you take hold of a large thing, you may lose your hold).

In considering the history of individual lexical items we must not lose sight of the fact that the Gemara material has not remained petrified in Ashkenaz: usage expanded or narrowed. New meanings were added: for example, *avir*, which in the Talmud means 'expanse, air', is in Yiddish 'bad air, bad odor' (*es avert*). *Dover-akher* (3.4) in the Talmud may also mean 'another thing, another meaning'; in Yiddish it is only a synonym for 'pig'. Among the yeshiva students *makhn a mishenikhnas* meant a prank on the New Moon of Adar when the gang seized a student and "let him have it," while singing *mishenikhnas oder marbim besimkhe*. *Puronyes* rendered in Yiddish a singular form /púronje/ to designate 'a shrewish woman'; *shibush* (7.17) in the Talmud means 'mistake', in Yiddish 'trifle, of trivial value'. All these are confirmations of the distinctive feature of the Way of SHaS, which we may characterize as variety within stability.

3.8.1.1 In the examples in 3.8.1, compounds such as *baltshuve* or *mase-(u)matn* are classified as Gemara language and not Bible language, although singly the roots are to be found in the Bible. The criterion for classification must be the fact that as wholes these words appear in writing no earlier than the postbiblical period. We shall apply the same criterion, of course, to the cases where the words of the Bible and the Gemara are similar. The Bible has *bishegagah* (in error) or *asefah* (gathering), but our *beshoygeg* and *asife* are postbiblical variants. Other such pairs are *dire* (dwelling, from the Talmud) and *maon*. The Bible has *makheov* (pain), the Talmud uses *yisurim;* Yiddish does not know of *makheov*. The Talmud has *nedunya* (dowry), and this is the form in western Yiddish to date; the biblical *mohar* is unknown in Yiddish. The Bible has *yere elohim* (God-fearing) but Yiddish uses the talmudic version *yore-shomayim* (Heaven-fearing). *Kos* (cup) is used in the Bible as feminine only, but in the language of the sages (2.5.2) it is masculine, and in Yiddish too we say only *der kos* (masculine); *di koyse* (feminine) is a retroformation within the boundaries of Yiddish: *sukes* ~ *suke*, *khales* ~ *khale*, and so on, and in the same fashion also *koyses* ~ *koyse*. We therefore include it in the inventory of Talmud language.

Even when the word itself is definitely found in the Bible, but occurs more frequently in the postbiblical era, reflection is called for before classification. The accepted word for 'fast' in the Bible is *zom* (in Yiddish seemingly only in *tsom-gedalye* [fast of Gedaliah]), but the Talmud has *taanit*, and thus it is in Yiddish *tones*. The later word *taanit* found in Ezra 9:5 must be classified as Late Hebrew, the literary reflection of which we see in the language of the sages. Experts in Hebrew long ago discovered that the redaction of the last books of the Bible took place some two hundred years before the Destruction of the Second Temple, when the spoken language was already Targumic or (in certain strata) Late Hebrew. In writing the attempt was made to retain the old norms, but occasionally a form or a word that the guardians of the "classical style" would have certainly considered "unliterary" forced its way in. This pertains to the word *mikah* (taking). It occurs once in the Bible, in such a late book as 2 Chronicles (19:7). We therefore have to say that it is a talmudic word; the biblical equivalent, occurring frequently, is *mehir* (price), a word completely unknown in Yiddish. The names of the directions *mizrekh* (east), *mayrev* (west), *tsofn* (north), and *dorem* (south) also occur in the Bible, but along with other synonyms; in the language of the Talmud, these four terms are standard, and so they are in Yiddish (2.17.2, 2.18.2.1). A further outgrowth of this is *mizrekh-vant* (east wall, pointing in the direction of Jerusalem, most important place) and *der mizrekh* (the fixture on the east wall for ready identification).

3.8.2 On the face of it the Bible should have occupied the first place in the Hebrew component of the language of the SHaS. Even prior to

the Destruction of the Second Temple Jews read the weekly lesson of the Torah twice in Hebrew and once in Targumic (2.7.1). But apparently even the regular reading of the Hebrew texts did not necessarily lead to the incorporation of elements of them in Yiddish. Every Jew, on returning from the synagogue on the Sabbath eve, sang *eyshes khayil* (a woman of valor; Proverbs 31:10–31), and it has long been the custom in Ashkenaz to recite *borkhe nafshi* (Psalms 104) on Sabbath afternoons in the winter season. But the first text has contributed to Yiddish only the expression *eyshes khayil* itself (which is also found in Proverbs 12:4) and the second text seemingly only *unterlenen dos harts* (to have a bite) as a calque (8.9) of the sentence "bread that stayeth man's heart."

On the other hand a large number of moral and ethical sayings from *Ethics of the Fathers*, which was read on Sabbath afternoons during the summer, entered into Yiddish. The difference probably is in the fact that the *Ethics of the Fathers* was *studied* not merely read.

If a study should confirm this hypothesis about what could have remained in the memory of the average Jew in olden days, then we would have a very specific picture. The daily prayer book must have left stronger traces in memory than the Sabbath prayers, and certainly stronger traces than the festival prayers. In the entire complex study in Ashkenaz much greater stress was, of course, put on the Talmud and more time devoted to it than the Bible; not for nothing have the Maskilim, with their emphasis on the Bible, laughed at the yeshiva student who cites a biblical sentence—from the tractate *Baba Kama*. As a rule the scholars were at all times in the minority, but conspicuous numbers of young people studied in the Gemara-*kheyder*, in the yeshiva, in the House of Study, and independently. And what about the men who were scholars and studied in their free time? From this prestige group knowledge trickled to those who knew less. This is the explanation of the fact ascertained long ago that in the Hebrew component of Yiddish the Talmud element prevails over the biblical.

But in the *khumesh* (Pentateuch)-*kheyder* the Pentateuch was studied, not merely read. The weekly lections were studied (together with the *haftoyre*, that is, selections from the Prophets). This drilling, which was in later years reinforced by the reading of the weekly portion of the Bible, must have led to a possibly better memorization of the Pentateuch than of the Talmud. The Jew grew up from childhood among the images, events, and places of the Pentateuch. Here are *odem un khave* (Adam and Eve), *der ganeydn* (the garden of Eden), Cain and Abel, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, *der mabl* (the flood), *avrom ovinu* (Abraham Our Father), Lot, Sarah and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, *di muter rokhl* (Mother Rachel), *yosef hatsadik* (the saintly Joseph) and his brothers, *mekhires yosef* (the sale of Joseph), Potiphar's wife, *moyshe rabeynu* (Moses Our Teacher), Jethro, *eser makes* (the ten plagues), *yetsies mitsrayim* (the exodus from Egypt), *kries-yamsuf* (the splitting of the Red Sea), Balaam (*bilem horoshe* [the wicked Balaam], apparently associated in sound with *biln* [to bark]), Mt. Sinai, *matn toyre* (the giving of the Torah), the worship of the *eygl* (the golden calf), the eating of manna in the desert, and many others.

As stated, much more of the Pentateuch entered Yiddish than of the other parts of the Bible, and again in the Pentateuch Genesis seems best represented. From Genesis alone more words entered Yiddish than from Proverbs and Ecclesiastes combined. Here are direct adoptions from Genesis (and this is not an exhaustive list): *pru urvu* (be fruitful and multiply; 1:22), *vehu yimshel bokh* (and he shall rule over thee; 3:16), *bezeyas apekho* (in the sweat of thy face; 3:19), *hashoymer okhi onoykhi* (am I my brother's keeper; 4:9), *yoyshev oyel* (homebody; 4:20), *polit* (refugee; 14:13), *ben-bayis* (member of the household; 15:3), *ad heyne* (till now; 15:16), *bris-mile* (circumcision; 17:10), *haktsakose* (according to the cry of it; 18:21), *ofer voeyfer* (dust and ashes; 18:27), *maysim asher loy yeosu* (deeds that ought not to be done; 20:9), *matamim* (delicacies; 23:4), *keyder* (Tatar; 25:13), *eyle toldes* (these are the generations; 25:19), *imkeyn* (if so; 25:22), *haliteyni* (let me swallow; 25:30), *hakol kol yankev, vehayodayim yedey eysef* (the voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau; 27:22), *oylim veyordim* (ascending and descending; 28:12), *mekhabek-umenashek (zayn)* (embrace and kiss; 29:13), *berokhl bitkhe haktane* (explicitly; 29:18), *hishomer lkho pen* (beware; 31:24), *kotoynti* (I am undeserving; 32:11), *kekhol hayom* (as the sand of the sea; 32:13), *mekashe leyled* (in hard labor; 35:16), *ben-zekunim* (a son of old age; 37:3), *bal-kholem* (dreamer; 37:19), *vehayeled eynenu* (the child is gone; 37:30), *bansher* (just because; 39:9), *poyser kholem (zayn)* (interpret a dream; 40:8), *khushim* (bewildered; 46:23), *es khatoay ani mazkir hayom* (I make mention of my faults this day; 41:9), *ma noymer uma nedaber* (what shall we say, and what shall we speak; 44:16), *alpi* (according to; 45:21), *tseyde-laderekh* (provisions; 45:21), *letoyve* (to advantage; 50:2).

From the other books of the Pentateuch there is much less lexical material in Yiddish, and still less from the Prophets. Complete saying and formulas in their Hebrew garb have come from Proverbs and Ecclesiastes: *tsdoke tatsil mimoves* (righteousness delivereth from death; Proverbs 10:2); *zeykher tsadik livrokhe* (the memory of the righteous shall be for a blessing; Proverbs 10:7); *yehalelkho zor veloy pikho* (let another praise thee and not thine own mouth; Proverbs 27:2); *dor hoylekh vedor bo* (one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; Ecclesiastes 1:4); *eyn kol khodesh takhas hashemesh* (there is nothing new under the sun; Ecclesiastes 1:9).

Then there are additional items that are not direct adoptions, but that utilize biblical imagery (8.9.3): *esn funem eyts hadaas* (to eat from the tree of knowledge); *mesushelakhs yorn* (Methuselah's years); *avrom ovinus eyniklekh* (seed of Abraham); *shiker (vi) lot* (as drunk as Lot); *gefinen kheyn* (to find favor); *farkoyfn di bkhoyre far a top lindzn* (to sell the birthright for a pot of lentils); *yisres nemen* (Jethro's names); *moyshe rabeynus kiele* (ladybug); *kries-yamsuf* (the splitting of the Red Sea); *shloyme hameylekhs khokhme* (King Solomon's wisdom); *iyevs yisurim* (Job's sufferings).

3.8.2.1 But there is no doubt that in some measure (and the size of the measure has yet to be determined) even the conceptions of the biblical heroes among Ashkenazic Jews passed through the filter of the Talmud and Midrash. The very name *odem horishn* (the first man) comes from the Talmud; the Pentateuch knows only of *odem*. The Pentateuch tells us about *kries-yamsuf* (the splitting of the Red Sea), but *shver vi kries-yamsuf* is an image of the Talmud (*Pesahim* 118a). *Naase vemishma* (we will do and obey) is in the Pentateuch, but the Talmud (*Shabat* 88a) pointed out that the phrase is surprising (Israel said 'we will do' before 'we will hear'). Many stories in the Bible begin with *vayehi* (and it came to pass), but *vu vayehi iz a tsore* (wherever the word *vayehi* occurs it is indicative of calamity) was noted by the sages of the Talmud (*Megillah* 10b). *Ayngezunken vi koyrekh* (sunk like Korah) is based on Numbers, chapter 16, but *raykh vi koyrekh* (rich like Korah) is based on the Talmud (*Pesahim* 119a). /Elje novi/ (Elijah the prophet) appears in Jewish folk fantasy not in his biblical, but in postbiblical imagery. *Shmuel-bukh*, *Mlokhim-bukh*, *Mayse-bukh*, and so on all drew from the treasures of the Talmud and Midrash.

The extent of the factor of study in shaping the character of Yiddish can be seen from the tremendous role that Rashi played. In the complex *khumesh mit rashi*, Rashi is not a mere expositor, and the same applies to Rashi on the Talmud. There are instances where the original has one formulation and the public has accepted only Rashi's reformulation. We have here a confirmation of the rule (3.6.4) that once vertical legitimation was accepted in principle the inviolability of "as the Bible says" or "as the Talmud says" was merely relative. The Talmud (*Nedarim* 64b) says: "*Arbaa hashuvim kemet: ani*" (Four are considered as dead: a poor man, a leper, a blind man, and a childless man); but the saying remained in Rashi's formulation (on Exodus 4:19), *oni khoshev kemes* (the poor man is considered as dead). Another saying is current in Rashi's formulation *eyn khaloym bli dvorim beteylim* (no dream without irrelevant matter, on Genesis 37:10), whereas in the Talmud (*Berakhot* 55a) it is phrased somewhat differently: *i efshar lahalom belo devarim betelim*.

Even in the language material of the Bible, one takes the liberty of modifying in the process of adoption into Yiddish. For instance, *er iz aroys beshen veayin* (he emerged battered), the Hebrew words *shen* (tooth) and *ayin* (eye) are combined from two different sentences (Exodus 21:26, 27), in which the words meet in different combinations. *Day-vehoyser* (more than enough) is abstracted from a sentence in Exodus 36:7, where *day* (enough) appears with a suffix and *vehoyser* (and too much) five words later. *Oyrekh* (visitor) is *oreah* in the Bible (2 Samuel 12:4), with three vowels. In Jeremiah 38:22 there appears the phrase *anshe shlomekha* (thy familiar friends), but the Yiddish has *anshey-shloy-meynu* (our fellowship). The Bible does not have the combination that Yiddish has, *kine-sine* (rivalry), but *gam sineatam gam kineatam* (their hatred as well as their envy; Ecclesiastes 9:6); not *sholem veshalve* (peace and tranquility), but *shalom behelek shalvah bearmenotayik* (peace within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces; Psalms 122:7); not *maysim-taytuim* (atrocities), but *maaseh-taatuim* (a work of delusion; Jeremiah 10:15).

The attitude toward the texts is one of great piety, but it is not a fetishistic one. No contradiction to the demand not to yield even an iota was seen in a slight deviation. In the permanence there could be change too, as long as the permanence was above all doubt.

3.8.3 We have now arrived at the third source from which lexical elements for the language of the Way of the SHaS flowed into Yiddish: the prayers. The term here includes, as stated, all relations between man and God expressed in words: supplications, benedictions, the Passover Haggadah, the penitential prayers, devotional prayers, and so on. Hence Sholom Aleichem drew liberally for the language of Tevye the Dairyman. Together with study (incidentally, prayers were also studied in the *kheyder*) the prayers were the strongest link with the lexical tradition of the Way of the SHaS for the average Jew. Every Jew is obligated to pray in the morning, afternoon, and evening. On the Sabbath and festivals there is an additional prayer (*musef*); the benedictions were on the lips of every Jew. In part the prayers were merely an intermediary for biblical and postbiblical thoughts and forms of expression, as we have seen in the case of *eyshes-khayil* (3.8.2).

Here is a random selection of this kind of lexical material: *ula yerakhem* (perhaps he will have pity), *oymer veoyse* (no sooner said than done), *akhre kikhles hakl* (at the very end), *omeyn, keyn yehi rotsn* (so be it), *omeyn selo* (so be it forever), *emes veyatsiv venokhn* (absolutely true), *bimheyre beyomeynu* (speedily), *baavoynoysenu horabim* (for our many sins), (*bentshn*) *goyml* (pronounce the benediction "He who grants favors to the undeserving," said on escape from danger), *borekh dayen emes* ("Blessed be the True Judge," said on being informed of someone's death), (*gleybn*)

beemune shleyme (to believe with perfect faith), *dayeynu* (enough), *hashiveynu* (change of mind), *uvo letsion goyel* (conclusion), *di veynendike teg* (the weeping days, the months of Elul and Tishri), *veal kulom* (and above all), *zikhroyne livrokhe* (of blessed memory), *khad-gadye* (jail), *khay vekayem* (vain protest), *yom hadin* (judgment day), *yoytsres* (types of prayer), *yisker* (prayer for the dead), *yomim neroim* (the High Holidays), *kedas moyshe veyisroel* (according to Jewish law), *kol dikhfin* (everyone in need), *kol hamarbe harey ze meshubekh* (the more one does, the better), *kol zman shehanshomo bekirbi* (so long as I am alive), *keoni bapesakh* (humble), *keafre deare* (worthless), *lekhayim toyvim ulesholem* (to life and to peace), *mo onu me khayeynu* (what are we and what is our life), *ma nishtane* (what is the difference?), *mukhn umzumen* (fully ready), *mi-shebeyrekh* (sharp criticism), *di nayn teg* (the first nine days in the month of Av, which are days of semimourning), *al khet* (confession), *aseres yimey tshuve* (the ten days of repentance), *sheeyne yodeya lishel* (utterly simple), *sheor yerokes* (miscellany), *shma yisroel* (help!), (*shpringen*) *kodesh* (cringe).

Because of the ready availability of this domain of concepts, its lexical items were apt to be drawn into metaphoric usage to a very high degree. *In eyn shma yisroel* means 'in one moment'; *klor vi a yid in ashre* 'fully conversant'; *aynkoyfn zikh mafter* 'to make a commitment that one immediately regrets'; *shlogn zikh al khet* 'strongly repent'. The place of each prayer in the prayer book is so well known that a time schedule can be based on it: he began from *ma toyvu* or from *borekh sheomar* (from the beginning); to be *bay nile* (toward the end); I arrived *tsu oleynu* or *tsu oysshpayen* (at the very end); it is *nokh ale hayems* (after all). In reciting the prayer *vayoymer dovid* the eyes are covered with the forearm; schoolboys therefore called skating downhill with closed eyes *vayoymer-dovid-glitsh* (*vayoymer-dovid* skating). Folksongs such as *aleph, an odler tut untern himl flien* (*a*—an eagle soars under the skies) are sung to the tune of *akdomis*; the folksong *ovinu meylekh, dos harts iz mir freylekh* (our Father, the King, my heart rejoices) begins in the manner of *ovinu malkeynu* (the prayer, our Father, our King); and the songs called (for want of a better name) religious are saturated with elements from the prayers.

3.8.4 Of the lesser sources feeding the language of the Way of the SHaS, mention can be made of the area of *Cabala* with such lexical elements as *begimatrye* (numerical value of words), *gilgl* (transformation), *dibek* (ghost possessing a man's body), *lamed-vov* (the Thirty-Six Righteous), *sitre-akhre* (the devil), *tsiner* (channel), *klipe* (husk), *kfitses-haderekh* (shortcut, miraculous shortening of a journey), *shem-hamfoyresh* (the ineffable Name), and so on. Close to it, and not always separable, is the area of *Hassidism: bkhine* (category), *bitl-hayesh* (self-effacement), *gashmies* (materiality), *dveykes* (cleaving to God), *hislayves* (rapture), *hispayles* (enthusiasm), *khedve* (bliss), *yandes* (conscience, risk), *nistalek* (pass away), *pnimies* (inwardness), *rukhnies* (spirituality), *shirayim* (remnants of the rebbe's food), and so on.

The channels through which Cabala language material reached the wider public have yet to be studied. *Hakl toluy bemazl vaafile seyfer toyre shebheykhl* (all depends on fate, even a scroll of the Torah in the synagogue) is in the *Zohar* (*Naso* 134a), and probably this is not the only saying that can be traced to that source. But in what scholarly circles was the study of the *Zohar* so popular that from them a sentence in that book could have been disseminated throughout the entire Yiddish-speaking community?

Mention should also be made of the Hebrew philosophical books, a direct reflection of which, through maskilic Hebrew, is also found in Yiddish (4.25.2).

3.8.5 One more source of the language of the Way of the SHaS must be mentioned: the technical language of the teacher. Here are examples: *adrabe* (on the contrary, by all means), *ipkhe mistavre* (quite the contrary), *ele ma* (but), *imkeyn* (if so), *amer* (then), *antkegn* (in connection with), *antkegn vos iz dos gekumen tsu reyd?* (How did we come to talk about it?), *oplernen* (deduce), *apshite* (all the more), *bedieved* (in retrospect), *bekhen* (therefore), *bemeyle* (of necessity), *befeyresh* (explicit), *brengen* (cite), *bishloyme* (granted), *dehayne* (namely), *dingen zikh* (discuss), *harb* (if, conjunction), *have-mine* (I would assume), *hayne* (namely), *hayne-hakh* (the same thing), *haynt* (*haynt, oyb ʃiz azoy, to* . . . [now if it be so, how . . .]), *hilkhes* (matters), *hayitokhn?* (is it possible?), *vikuekh* (debate), *khilek* (difference), *taytshn* (*oystaytshn, fartaytsh* [explain]), *kloymer* (so to say), *lekhatkhile* (initially), *lemay* (how come?), *leoylem* (actually), *makhn* (*makht Rashi* [to say, Rashi says]), *mikolshkn* (all the more so), *monefshekh* (either or), *mimeyle* (as a matter of course), *mamesh* (literally), *nafkemine* (difference), *sugye* (topic), *smikhes-haparshe* (connection), *al-akhes-kame-vekame* (all the more so), *alkeyn* (hence), *pilpl* (subtle argumentation), *pshite* (all the more), *pshat* (literal meaning), *pshetlen zikh* (quibble), *klots-kashe* (foolish question), *kalvekhoymer* (*a fortiori* argument), *terets* (pretext), and so forth.

There are various designations for various types of scholars. The most frequent are *boke* (adept) and *kharef* (keen). A *sinay* is roughly identical with a *boke*; he grasps the Torah as it was given on Mt. Sinai; the *oyker-horim* (mountain mover) moves heaven and earth with his casuistry and acumen.

All four of these terms are in the Talmud, and how could it be otherwise? The system of study goes back in an uninterrupted chain to the Mishna; hence the school terminology in its predominant part came from the oldest strata of the Loshn- koydesh determinant (which, let us recall, includes Hebrew and Targumic; 2.8.1). But also in this respect

the Way of the SHaS did not remain stationary. In cases such as *tomer* (Hebrew *tomar* [you may say]) or *mekheteyse* (whence do you come?) Yiddish deviated considerably both from the original pronunciation and the original meaning, and even the orthography is sometimes different. Frequently the student uses the original expression of the Gemara along with a Yiddish translation (not necessarily word for word; 8.9.2): *Tonu rabonen* (the sages have thought); *lemo hadover doyme* (what is this comparable to?); *may ko mashme lon* (what is this telling us?); *teyku* (the question remains); *bame dvorim amurim* (when is this applicable?). In *madekh* and in *ele vos (den)?* or *ele vo'den?* (what then?) we have a combination of a Loshn-koydesh-component element with a German-component element. The same is true in *harbe sugye* (a difficult topic), in *pshetl* (quibble), or in *nishkoshe* (*nisht koshe* [not difficult], which apparently came into being as an antonym to *koshe* [difficult]), or in *klots-kashe* ([a question] put like a log [and blocking passage]).

If new methods of study evolved in Ashkenaz there was no hesitation to describe them with local, that is, non-Loshn-koydesh-component names; for instance, *oygsburger*, *nirnberger*, *regnsburger*, as mentioned, for example, by R. Isaiah Horowitz (the holy *shelah*) around 1600. The expressions per se are probably older; they may go back to the yeshivas of the period of Old Yiddish.

The designations for the distinguished scholar are *ile* and *goen*, but German-component elements are also introduced to characterize someone as a *poyersher kop* (peasant head); a younger contemporary of the Gaon of Vilna, the Lublin rabbi Azriel Horowitz, was renowned in scholarly circles as *der ayzerner kop* (iron head). In contrast to the one who studies in the yeshiva is the one who studies *far zikh* /'farzix/ (by himself), a /'farzixnik/.

The Way of the SHaS is particularly manifest precisely in the German-component lexical units employed by the scholar, that is, the uniqueness of the Jewish life style in traditional Ashkenaz. The substantive *videranand*, used to describe a logical contradiction, is etymologically linked with the German prepositional phrase *wider einander* (opposite), but entirely different in meaning. *Haynt* (for instance in a sentence, "*Haynt vi kumt er tsu zogn az . . . ?*" [Now how does he get to say that . . . ?] or *Vos iz derfun gedrungen?* [What is the implication?]) can hardly be explained by reference to New High German or Middle High German (*hiute||heute; dringen*), for in no stage of German did these words have the same meaning as among Jews. *Opfregn* is also a specific Jewish formulation that arose in the study procedure of asking a question and demonstrating that it was not warranted; *abfragen* in German means 'inquire continually of one after the other'. The same applies to *lernen* or *oplernen* (deduce). *Lernen* is found in German, but *er ken lernen, er iz a*

lerner (he is a scholar) is unintelligible for the speaker of German who knows no Yiddish.

The language of the scholar was a fusion of linguistic material from all sources of tradition, in addition to his own professional language. From the scholars the language radiated to considerably wider circles of society, which may be designated vaguely as *talmidey khakhomim* and *sheyne yidn* (disciples of the wise, prominent Jews), that is, the learned and cultured (3.10), who in turn transmitted it to an ever wider public. In order to use the words *tomer* (perhaps) or *monefshekh* (either or) or *nishkoshe* (tolerable), in order to ask with a sarcastic hint: *vi iz ober der din az . . . ?* (suppose it were . . . ?), one did not have to be a participant in the scholarly sphere. Mere membership in the society that lived according to the Way of the SHaS sufficed. This influence remained also in the secular sector (3.14–3.15).

3.9 A large part of the words and expressions of the students' repertory left its confinement and entered the standard language, even the language of the secular sector (3.15). But the symbolic significance of the students' language reaches even further, and it can be said without exaggeration that in the lexical pair *fregn* ~ *opfregn* the general Way of the SHaS is clearly manifested. It is possible to challenge a fellow student's thesis even though he be a greater scholar or older; one may even indulge in the saying *omer abaye iz nokh nit keyn raye* (the mere citing of Abaye is no proof). Abaye may be one of the leading Amoraim, but reference to an authority does not replace the necessity of adducing logical proof. There is no dogmatic yes—no in many instances. Instead other reactions are permissible: *s'iz a boykh-svore* (it is a wild guess); *tomer farkert* (perhaps it is the other way around); *vos iz derfun gedrungen?* (what can be deduced from this?); *yesh omrim* (some say); *s'iz mutl-besofek* (doubtful); *s'ken gemolt zayn* (it is possible); *a svore* (possibly); *efsher* (perhaps); *efsher take* (perhaps indeed); *mistame* (probably); (*s'hot*) *a ponem* (seemingly); *s'iz a have-mine* (there is a possibility); *der seykhl trogt oys* (it stands to reason); *mashmoes* (presumably). All this grew out of the "initial pattern" of Ashkenaz, of the vertical legitimation. The Talmud itself is built on discussion, Hillel and Shammai are only the best known, but not the only antagonistic pairs among the sages of the Talmud. Occasionally the Talmud echoes the apprehension that through the disputes the Law should not be divided into two laws, and consequently the precaution of "not multiplying controversies in Israel"; but as early as in the Mishna *Abot* (Ethics of the Fathers) mention is made of *mahloket leshem shamayim* (a controversy for the sake of heaven). Two radically different methods, such as literal and homiletical interpretations, prevailed in study. In a previous chapter (2.5–2.8) the great ideological struggle over the question of language, which

lasted for centuries, was discussed. Similarly, and indeed with reference to the intimation in the Talmud, there appeared in Ashkenaz a school of thought advocating the introduction of prayer in Yiddish (4.7–4.9.09). All agreed that Yiddish did not possess the pure holiness of Loshn-koydesh, but opinions differed over the gradations of holiness. There was no administrative machine to decide in favor of this or the other side, physical coercion was impossible; yet somehow a way out was found and the community was not torn asunder.

As long as the boundaries of the Way of the SHaS had been fixed by the prior heritage, and the principle of distance between Jewishness and non-Jewishness had been fixed, considerable nuances, variants, and even tensions could be tolerated within the marked-off boundaries.

This was the way of Ashkenaz. It is therefore necessary to banish once and for all the journalistically dictated conception that up to the Haskalah Ashkenaz was congealed. Similarly the subject is wrested from its context when the decision is made that if there were differences, these were over trivialities. A system has details, not trifles. Whether the prayer *vehasienu* should be recited on New Year's was the subject of discussion not only among the scholars of Loter in the eleventh century; they even inquired of the sages in Jerusalem. There could be differences of opinion as to whether this selection or another in the prayers should or should not be recited, not only between Worms and Mainz or Vilna and Grodno, but even between the two synagogues in Worms itself or in Grodno itself. (From similarities in such customs, settlement history may occasionally be deduced.)

Ashkenaz well knew of *plugte derabonen* (disagreement among scholars) and *makhloykes haposkim* (controversy among the codifiers). In deciding the law there were liberal and strict constructionists (and even in the theory of when to apply a liberal construction there were differences of opinion). To establish his right to decide otherwise than the early authorities, the ROSH pointed to the fact that Rashi's grandsons Rabenu Tam and the RaSHBaM, opposed their grandfather in many instances. "Who is greater than Rashi, who illuminated the eyes of the Diaspora?"; but no matter, "it is a Law of truth, and no one must be flattered." One passage in the Tosafot states expressly that sometimes the sages of the Talmud were not conversant with the sentences of the Torah, and concerning Rabenu Tam we are told that in a responsum about the knot of the phylacteries he opposed Moses. No wonder then that the MaHaRSHaL with his stormy temperament spares neither early nor later authorities; that the MaHaRaM Schiff says that the words of the MaHaRSHA in a certain matter are nonsense. The opponents of the great R. Menashe Ilyer, a frequent visitor in the house of the Gaon of Vilna, charged him with interpreting the Mishna in contradiction to the conclusions of the Gemara.

The entire matter of the responsa (3.6.3) is after all not merely a question of stabilizing norms but also an expression of difference in passing from theory to practice. The inquirer frequently gathers more than one opinion and then decides to the best of his judgment.

In the course of adhering to the Gemara there are even theoretical breakthroughs. How do we know (3.6.1) that the hour (that is, the conditions of the times) calls for a change in practice? How could a custom be established that ultimately supersedes the law? How was it possible during the Middle Ages to celebrate weddings on Friday, when the Talmud would not tolerate it? The very possibility of tension in the Way of the SHaS derives from the fact that it is governed by two principles. One is: I do so, because my teacher did so, and his practice goes back to the Gemara. The other is: I may, and sometimes I must contravene my teacher's prohibition, for truth is supreme and at times one must go against the accepted in order to attain to the truth of the Torah. The Gemara cherishes highly the trait of *saintliness*, but knows also of a *silly saint*. The rule is: In case of conflict between a single authority and many authorities, the law is with the majority, but strong personalities abrogate this law and establish in time a new majority. The deeply Ashkenazic Hassidism persisted and introduced the Sephardic rite in prayer. At the time the outcome was unpredictable; this can be seen only in retrospect.

3.9.1 Among the bearers of the tradition tensions are manifest whose importance even the outsider cannot miss. Some scholars were inclined to asceticism, others to conviviality. Some were immersed in the Cabala, others eschewed it and inclined to rationalism. Are girls to be taught Torah? Generally, the Mishna in *Sotah* is cited, namely that he who teaches his daughter is as if he taught her unseemliness; but this is only the second half of the sentence, which begins with "A man is in duty bound to teach his daughter Torah." This means that the Mishna opposes one opinion to the other. The MaHaRaM of Rothenburg would not permit illustrations in the *mahazor* (prayerbook for the holidays) in order not to distract the worshiper; but many communities ignored the MaHaRaM's instructions. In Cologne, R. Eliakim, son of Joseph, father-in-law of the RaAbaN, forbade pictures in the synagogue after the First Crusade, but around 1175 in the Regensburg synagogue Ephraim the Elder *did* permit ornamentation in the form of animals and birds. The former was afraid of a suggestion of idolatory; one might think that the ornaments are worshipped. The latter stated specifically: Is it plausible that through pictures one should be drawn to idolatry? For centuries the first view apparently dominated, but the great synagogue in Mogilev-Dnieper was decorated in the eighteenth century with artistic designs.

Moreover, several synagogues (and not Reform ones) with bells are

known from western Europe, and although bells were generally frowned on among Jews no one anathemized the attendants of those synagogues. *Oysbaytn dos rendl* (apostasy) is the nadir, but even in the attitude to apostates, and especially to those who reverted to Judaism, there is considerable amplitude; the son of R. Gershom, Luminary of the Diaspora, apostasized and his father performed the *shivah* rite for him—not on his apostasy, but on his death. Should proselytizing of non-Jews be permitted? In effect, there were numerous instances of proselytizing in Germany, Poland, and Lithuania, but the MaHaRSHaL opposed proselytizing. He also objected to the fact that at the time of the First Crusade (*gzeyres tatnu*) Jews had slain their children to avoid their being baptized. He maintained that a Jew must not take his life even when he fears that under torture he may implicate other Jews and bring death on them. Indeed we say "May our eyes behold Your return to Zion in mercy" three times daily and on the Sabbath four times, but when Sabbetai Zevi came with a promise of imminent redemption, practically all leaders of the generation opposed him violently.

One could indulge in free variations, because one was sure of the fundamental principle (3.6.4). There was no hesitation to vary even basic symbols. Isaiah 2:3 reads "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," and the theoretical primacy of Jerusalem calls forth no doubts among the celebrated scholars. But when Bari and Otranto, in southern Italy, became established centers of Jewish learning, Rabenu Tam in his *Sefer hayashar* calmly wrote "For out of Bari shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Otranto" (2.12), without fearing it would be construed as a desecration of the sacred. His contemporary, the RaABaN, in the case of a question about leavened dough forbidden on Passover, advised with the same ease: Let us refer the question to the scholars of Bonn, for thence go forth the law and the word of God. In recent centuries there was probably no city among Jews comparable to Vilna, the Jerusalem of Lithuania, but Vilna was not the only city among Ashkenazim that earned the epithet of Jerusalem; Eisenstadt in Burgenland was called Little Jerusalem, and Sátoraljaújhely was called Jerusalem of Hungary.

In the Way of the SHaS this was no dissonance, for the accent there was not on the principle of territory. After the Destruction of the Second Temple, when there was apprehension "lest the Torah be forgotten among Jews," Judah the Prince, codifier of the Mishna, helped in raising the prestige of Babylonia. The Talmud, in the tractate *Kiddushin* and again in the tractate *Ketubot*, says: "All countries are like dough in comparison with Palestine, and Palestine is like dough in comparison with Babylonia"; the Midrash *Bereshit Rabbah* simply refers to Babylonia as *Erez Yisrael*. In sum: The Ashkenazic culture-system was not a

totalistic, but a pluralistic one. This cannot be said about all stages in Jewish history. In the course of Jewish historical experience, there were splits: Samaria parted from Jerusalem, the Karaites from the Rabbanites, and the Sabbateans and Frankists too remained without the fold. But the dramatic struggle between the Hassidim and Mitnagdim shook Ashkenaz to its foundation, but did not tear it asunder. A disciple of the Gaon of Vilna in a pamphlet of about 1800 referred to the Hassidim as the "accursed Hassidim"; they were suspected of following the ways of the *shebsn* (Sabbateans). On the other hand, Nathan of Nemirov, a devout disciple of Nakhman of Bratslav, wrote that the Mitnagdim renounce "the true life." But a hundred and fifty years after the conflict the leaders of orthodoxy again sat together and could declare: Both this and that are the words of the living God.

Let us anticipate and declare that the ancient relative freedom of the Way of the SHaS enabled the coexistence of the traditionalist and secularist sectors in Ashkenaz in the modern period (3.14).

3.10 We have mentioned above special languages that arise among the various callings in a community. Among Ashkenazic Jews, we have established that the students should be included among the prominent specialized groups (3.8.5). But the prestige of the students was so high in the society that everyone wanted to be among them or at least their equal as far as possible. By virtue of its wide diffusion, the pursuit of study resulted in a special linguistic style (2.15.1)—the style of the scholar.

It is not the only style in Yiddish that has arisen in the Jewish community solely because of the Way of the SHaS. Not all lines can still be drawn with certainty. The matter seems comparatively simple when the subject is a style conditioned by a special literary form, say, the language of *tkhine* (special supplications for women). Study language is also in part recorded in literature; hence we can approach its oral manifestations as well. But there are styles that reveal themselves principally in the spoken language, and to these belongs the style of the scholar (the written language was Hebrew from the very start; 4.4). Several studies on this style are available, but many more are required.

The parallel existence of Hassidism and Mitnagdism gave rise to the *Hassidic* style. This means not only artistic works such as the *Tales* of Nakhman of Bratslav (and later on Peretz, Berdichevsky, and their followers), but also that manner of speech in half-sentences and insinuations that Peretz expressed through his ellipses. Hassidim of the same *rebe* generally address each other with the familiar *du* (thou), even a younger person in speaking to an older. The easiest to grasp is, of course, the specific Hassidic vocabulary. The *rebe* is something entirely different from the *rabbi* (Hassidim have a rabbi too), and also *tsadik*

(righteous man) has assumed a specific meaning. In modern parlance, the *gabe* (warden) could be described as the rebbe's secretary. The rebbe's residence is the *hoyf* (court). Some rebbes drew large *forekhts* (pilgrimages). The Hassidim journey to celebrate (*zikh praven*) at the rebbe's residence; he is handed a supplicatory note (*kvitl*); he is given a monetary gift (*pidyen*). The rebbe conducts a festive table (*pravet tish*); the visitors partake of the remnants of the rebbe's food (*khapn shirayim*); stock melodies (*skarbove nigunim*) are sung. A gathering of Hassidim is called a *zits* (sitting); among the Lubavitch Hassidim the term is *farbrengen* (enjoyment). One drinks *tikn* ('purification of the soul'; hence, the brandy drunk at someone's *yortsayt* and, finally, somewhat humorously 'a drink of whisky'). So many Hassidim had named their sons after the first rebbe of Ger, R. Itche Mayer Alter (d. 1866), that Jews of the vicinity of Warsaw were called *tshmayerlekh* (< *itshe-mayerlekh*). The Mitnagdim called the Hassidim in general the *kat* (sect), and possibly the designation *vayse khevre* (white gang) was given to them because some rebbes, in the manner of R. Isaac Luria and later cabalists, were wont to dress in white.

Differentiations need not be sharply drawn as those between Hassidim and Mitnagdim to cause differentiation in language. Language is a system of communication; therefore we have to posit the thesis that each social difference will ultimately leave a linguistic repercussion. If we place the class of professional erudites in the center of the group, the class of scholars is around them in a concentric circle. In a second circumscribed ring is the category of *sheyne yidn* (beautiful [that is, distinguished] Jews). Shlomo Noble established that this category attempts to refrain from coarse expressions, substituting such as sound somewhat more refined. They go to the *merkhets* (bathhouse, in Hebrew) instead of *bod* (bathhouse, in Yiddish); they don *takhtoynim* (underwear, in Hebrew) instead of *gatkes* (underwear, in Yiddish); they take a bite (*nemen epes in moyl arayn*) because it is more refined than eating (*esn*); and then they take a nap (*leygn zikh tsu*) because *geyn shlofn* (to go to sleep) appears to them too coarse, too worldly. The run-of-the-mill Jews also have their standards of refinement and they will not utter boorish expressions, such as *fresn* (devour) or *pofn* (sleep) but are satisfied with the words *esn* (eat) and *shlofn* (sleep). Thus we see that the evaluation of refined versus coarse is relative, depending on the rung in the social ladder. And we see in addition that such elementary, universal words as *esn* or *shlofn* may at times become social identification markers in the system of the Way of the SHaS. Just as there are gradations of holiness, so there are gradations of crassness.

On the other hand, we also deduce linguistic influences of one group on the other. The distinguished Jews profited from the erudition of the scholars, and the ordinary Jews profited from them, listening in the

House of Study to the discussions of "the lions." Even the village peddler and water carrier, who somewhere in a corner of the House of Study received instruction from a scholar in a moralistic tract or homiletic book, benefited from the exalted style. Something even reached the women, who did not engage in study themselves; women's literature (4.11.1) was produced by authors who were moderately, some of them even highly, learned. Seemingly, the entire community adopted the talmudic chant, the habit of answer *why not?* to a question that began with *why?*

3.10.1 When it is said that Yiddish became and grew as the language of the Way of the SHaS, it does not mean that *each* linguistic unit, or even each *lexical* unit, bears the marked stamp of this life system. This has to be understood in the same way as when it is said of an individual that his whole life was dominated by one idea. The trivial functions and acts are discounted, the purely individual phases of his biography are ignored; but to the extent that ideology manifests itself, it is *this* idea and no other. To the extent that the ideological background is discernible in traditional Yiddish, up to the rise of the secular sector, it is the background of the Way of the SHaS. Since applied Halakah and study are in the center of interest, and both are essentially one and the same, the metaphors and similes are very frequently taken from the sphere of Jewishness. One can take something and *tseleygn oyf telerlekh* (lay [it] out on saucers; that is, spell it out in detail) or one can *makhn a gantsn peyresh* (make a complete commentary on it). A folksong that has nothing to do with scholarship reads: "It is certainly worthwhile /to have a love affair/ *nor ven iz dos geret gevorn* (but only with proviso)/ that it be with one, not with three." A Jew can say: "What will happen to all, will happen to me too"; but since *Yisroel* is both the totality, the people of Israel, and a widespread name of an individual, the Way of the SHaS can create a saying, "what will happen to all of *Yisroel* will happen to *reb Yisroel* (the individual)." *Tsitsis* (fringes on the garment) that have seven threads are acceptable, but the law requires eight threads; therefore *kofl shmoynedik* (twice eight) means 'entirely according to the law, with all ornaments, authentic', even though the subject is no longer *tsitsis* but a pauper or a slap. A *kofl-shmoynediker* (twice eight) *patsh* (slap) is a humorous phrase, pairing concepts that are essentially discordant, but a relationship can nevertheless be detected. *Aynkoyfn zikh mafter* (acquire the honor of reading the *haftorah* in the synagogue; humorously, acquire something troublesome); need something *oyf kapores* (as an atonement offering; humorously, unnecessary object); *opshpiln a khasene* (celebrate a wedding; humorously, make a scandal); and numerous other units could be described thus—a description deriving from a concrete situation or procedure is applied to a larger sum of facts.

Shortly it will become manifest how strongly humor affects the

language of the Way of the SHaS in expressing the relations between man and man, man and the world, even between man and God. The field is vast, and this is not the place to enter into psychological speculations connected with a distinction among humor, comedy, sarcasm, witticism, jest, joke, fun, irony, satire, and so on. In another context definitions of such terms are very important; but let us agree that the term *language humor* stands here as the overall name for all linguistic stimuli of smiles, laughter, and ridicule.

3.11 At first it could seem that since the Way of the SHaS deals with sanctity even in mundane things (3.5.2), a humorous consideration of the values of the Way of the SHaS could have penetrated Ashkenaz only after the beginning of secularization. But this is not so. Some humor-affected linguistic units stem from pre-Emancipation times; this fact is incontestable, as will be shown shortly, and, therefore, only an explanation of it can be essayed. One explanation is the inclusiveness of the Way of the SHaS. The tensions within the traditional community created contesting parties, and the other's behavior, the other's manner, was viewed as legitimately subject to ridicule. Moreover, even the illustrious scholar cannot be immersed in his studies twenty-four hours a day; a ray of laughter and a smile must pervade his world too, and since he is surrounded by elements of holiness, these must become the object of his humor. (Compare the psychological penetration of the proverb: *a gandz kholemt fun hober* [a goose dreams of oats].) Had the culture of the community prohibited laughter, the irrepressible urge to laughter would have been inhibited and its linguistic manifestations would have remained beyond the threshold, as for instance in the case of obscenity. But the nontotalitarian character of the Way of the SHaS permitted one view and also another view; hence language humor became a legitimate part of the language.

Thus every group in the community, every member of the group, became a potential target of the mirth maker. The greatest deference is shown the illustrious scholars, but no apotheosis. The eminent scholar of Zarfat toward the end of the thirteenth century, R. Isaac of Corbeil, has not only the honorific of Pious bestowed on him but also, because of his long nose, he is referred to in the literature as the *baal hahotem* (The Nose). Why not? The Talmud mentions a R. Gamaliel with the same nickname. Many distinguished rabbis (Rabenu Tam, R. Jacob Pollak, R. Ayzele Kharif of Slonim) were noted for their witticizing.

Even the theory of the Way of the SHaS, to the extent that it can be abstracted from facts and statements, prepared outlets for excessive tensions. Table talk cannot be compared with a discussion on the Torah, but even the table talk of scholars, says the Talmud, requires study. The Talmud already mentions *milta dibedikhuta*, a technique of beginning

a lesson with something humorous; the *baekhn* (entertainer) as we know him in Ashkenaz is apparently a product of Ashkenaz, but the function of merrymaking is much older.

Clearly, in the life system of the Way of the SHaS, the associations for language humor must also come from concepts at hand. 'The supply is greater than the demand' can be rendered in the language of the Way of the SHaS: *Mer shokhtim vi hiner* (more ritual slaughterers than chickens). An incongruous pairing (for example, when there is too great a difference in size between husband and wife) is described as *esreg* (citron) *un lulev* (and palm branch), or *shabes hagodl* (the great Sabbath) *un kurts-fraytik* (and the shortest Friday in the year). Something can be so small that it looks like *tal-umoter in a kleyn siderl* (dew and rain in a small prayer book; prayer books contain a reminder that in the winter season the words *tal-umoter* [dew and rain] are to be substituted; these words are generally in smaller print even in standard size prayer books); a word badly misspelled is *noyekh mit zibn grayzn* (the name Noah, consisting in Hebrew of two letters, written with seven orthographic mistakes). Something that cannot persevere will last from *ester-tones biz purim* (from the Fast of Esther, on the day before Purim, till Purim). A man no longer fit for anything is *an opgeshlogene heshayne* (a beaten willow twig, used in the Sukkoth services). Someone that has drunk excessively can have *in kepl mer vi in fleshl* (more in the head than in the bottle) or he can be *farshnoshket* (tipsy) or *untern glezl* (in his cups), but he can also be *bemitsvoysov* (by His commandments) or *begilufn*, and in describing a situation of drunkenness we may resort to *ketoyv lev hameylekh bayayin* (when the heart of the king was merry with wine). A man in advanced age died because he had *ibergegesn mit afikoymens* (eaten too many *afikoymens*—the last piece of matzo eaten at the Passover meal). "The least of the evils" is *di beste fun di eser makes* (the best of the ten plagues). One that always consents to everything is an *omeyn-zoger* (saying amen). Of a sensitive man of distinction, complaining that he has been offended, it may be said mockingly that *men hot im tsedrapet di moreynu* (his title *moreynu* [our teacher] was scratched). Concerning one who has given vent to his dissatisfaction at the improper place it may be said: *er iz broygez oyfn khazn, shpringt er nit ken kodesh* (he is angry at the cantor, so he refuses to make the proper obeisance at the word *kadosh* [holy]). It is believed that all generations were present at the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai; if a Jew is lacking basic Jewish qualities, the word is *er iz gekumen shpet tsum barg sinay* (he arrived late at Mt. Sinai). If something happens too late, the talmudic passage can be cited *over zmanoy botl korbonoy* (if the proper time has passed the sacrifice is nullified), but there is also the jest *esroygim nokh sukes* (citrons after the Feast of Tabernacles). Of a procrastinator it can be said that he defers to *khalemoyed shvues*

(the intermediary days of Pentecost, which consists of two days only and, therefore, has no intermediary days). Over a lost cause one can *opzogn rabonen-kadish* (recite the rabbis' kaddish, the prayer for the dead). The names of the tractates of the Talmud are played on: "He is studying *Tomid* (always) but knows *Makes* (nothing)" or "He is given *Brokhes* (blessings) but has *Makes* (plagues)."

3.12 Did the language humor at first confine itself within modest thematic boundaries and only gradually begin to attack progressively higher objects and concepts? As long as there is no study on this subject, we must rest content with conjecture. But we may conjecture that there were always bold individuals who were more aggressive both in the sharpness of their tongue and in their selection of the objects of attack. Even the same person in different moods can be more aggressive or less aggressive. But purely logically a sequence may be constructed. It begins with attacking character traits that run counter to group norm. Here the attack is basically not denunciatory, but conservatory. In an emotional state (gaiety, anger) the inhibitions become weaker, the target larger, and the attack more intensive. Jews and Jewishness in general may become the object of attack, although Jews regard themselves as chosen people and know that there is no higher life system than Jewishness.

The closest object of humor is the *veytsidkoskho* (the religious hypocrite); the *tsadik in pelts* (the saintly man in his fur coat), one *vos meynt nit di hagode nor di kneydlekh* (who is not intent on the recital of the miracles of the Exodus but on the dumplings that follow this recital). A sanctimonious woman is dubbed a *tsitsis-shpinerin* (a spinner of *tsitsis* [fringes on the garments worn by religious Jews]) or *pushke-gabete* (warden of the charity box). The aversion to the hypocrite is clearly manifest in the Talmud. It created the image of the person who performs his religious ablutions and holds in his hand a reptile (*toyvl vesherets beyodoy*), which is ritually unclean, and employs the canons of argumentation to prove that the reptile is not ritually unclean with 150 arguments (*metaher sherets bekan tamim*); and so Ashkenaz regards the hypocrite, who practices *moydim biz der erd, shmad-shtik bizn himl* (who bows all the way to the ground in prayer but whose offenses rise to high heaven). Next the acerbity of folk wit, in the spirit of the Way of the SHaS, fell on the ignorant. The Mishna even denies the possibility of piety to the ignorant. The Gemara is not quite so caustic, but prohibits dwelling with an ignorant person who is pious. The act of the pious, even though he be a scholar, must not, in the view of the Way of the SHaS, always be accepted at face value (*hasid shote* [the saintly fool]; 3.9).

There are times when man is more liable to transgress. Gambling, for example, is prohibited, but on Hanukkah and Purim one may indulge

in dice or cards instead of study (and because of this the deck of cards is called *kleyn shas* [miniature SHaS]). Similarly on these festivals one may speak of things that are otherwise prohibited. The Purim *kidesh* and the Purim *droshe* (sermon) derive from the traditional world. A Purim rabbi was elected in the yeshivas. Students in the yeshiva of the celebrated R. David Oppenheimer in Prague produced *akta ester mit akhashveyresh* (*The Story of Esther and Ahasuerus*) in the very beginning of the eighteenth century. *Khanike-katoves* (Hanukkah fun) is an expression well known in western Yiddish. Simhat Torah is also a merry festival.

But occasions for merriment are not confined to certain days in the year. As soon as the tongue becomes loose, careless talk begins: *vos bay a nikhtern oyf der lung iz baym shikern oyf der tsung* (what the sober man has on his mind the drunk has on his tongue). It is therefore more than a coincidence that we spoke first of language relaxation under the influence of alcohol. One can even be *a gants yor shiker un purim nikhter* (drunk all year, and sober on Purim). As indicated above, the tumbler of brandy received via association among Hassidim a new name through the Cabala term *tikn* (salvation). Hassidim and non-Hassidim alike may take *a bisl shakl* (from the benediction *shehakol nihya bidvaro* [all was created by His word], pronounced over brandy). The *biterer tropn* (bitter drop) is another euphemism for alcohol, although initially it meant the drop of gall that the Angel of Death drips from the point of his sword into the mouth of the dying.

The stronger impulse to attack may also widen the plane of attack, and there may be murmurs that Jewishness is perhaps not always the highest in the scale of values: "with Jews it is only good to eat *kugl* (pudding)." Why? Because *got zol ophiln fun goyishn koyekh un fun yidishn moyekh* (God save us from gentile strength and Jewish intellect). Another listener probably took umbrage at these words: *bays zikh op di tsung* (bite your tongue), but these words continued, because there are enough bitter hearts: *lod mikh tsum unsane toykef* (summon me to the Heavenly Court); *shray khay vekayem!* (shout in vain, although *hay vekayam* are attributes of God); *imru leylohim, gaday do lampi* (the Hebrew phrase is from the Yom Kippur liturgy; the second part, the sham translation, is in Polish and means 'speak to the lamp').

Ironical-skeptical remarks about God are older than Ashkenaz: *Got zitst oybn un port untn* (God sits above and arranges matches below) is formed after the Midrash (*Bereshit rabbah* 68); similarly: *Got aleyn iz nit raykh, nor er nemt bay eynem un git dem andern* (God Himself is not rich, but he takes from one and gives to the other, after *Bamidbar rabbah* 22). From various other utterances in this tone we may possibly deduce more caustic expressions in the talmudic period, but a painstaking hand has toned them down. Occasionally Ashkenaz shows little timidity. Shy

in formulation, but with an undertone of reproach: *got vet helfn—nor vi helft got biz got vet helfn?* (God will help—but how does God help till God will help?), or more directly: *got hot lib dem oreman un git dem nogid* (God loves the poor and gives to the rich), or *far vos iz azoy biter di oreme layt? vayl der oyzer dalim hot tsayt* (Why are the poor so miserable? Because He who helps the poor has time.). Open criticism of God's ways: *Oylem keminhogoy noyheg; derfar hot take di velt aza ponem* (The world pursues its natural course, that is why it is in such a state; the first phrase is taken from the Talmud [*Avoda Zarah* 54b]; the second phrase originated in the Yiddish community). The same more caustic: *Got is a foter—az er git nit a make, git er a bloter* (God is a father—if he gives us no abcess he gives a boil). The same, but even more caustic and incisive: *A velt hostu bashafn reboyne-Sheloylem—aza yor oyf mir—firn firstu di velt, aza yor oyf mayne sonim* (Master of the universe, you have created a world, may I have such a year—but the way you conduct this world, may my enemies have such a year!). But even the Jew who called out in despair: *Dayn mazl, got, vos du voynst azoy hoykh, anit volt men dir ale shoybn oysgehakt* (Lucky for you, God, that you dwell so high, otherwise all your windows would be smashed!) was not considered a heretic, although his outcry did sound like heresy. It was understood and glossed over. The Jew may have possibly become frightened by his own words and have done penance, but both penance and protest found accommodation in the amplitude of the Way of the SHaS.

3.13 Yiddish sometimes uses mechanisms for achieving a humorous effect that only the Way of the SHaS could have provided. In the case of the acronym *YaKNeHoZ* (4.1) we have initials introduced into the language as words. More frequently use is made of the technique of *nutrikn*, where a "real" word is interpreted as the initials of several words (for instance, how do we know that a cantor is a fool?—because *KHaZN* [cantor] is an acronym of KHazonim Zenen Naronim [cantors are fools]). Very popular are pseudoexplications of a sentence or passage, frequently introduced by *makht Rashi* (Rashi says), *and Haman came*, says Rashi: *tshort yevo prinyos* (Russian: the devil brought him). The words in the Book of Esther are purportedly commented on by Rashi—and in Russian.

Other mechanisms, as can be seen from the numerous illustrations scattered throughout this chapter, are not necessarily characteristic of the Way of the SHaS. But we must be interested in how they are utilized in this culture system, how it orders the linguistic material.

Most conspicuous is rhyme: *der mentsh trakht un got lakht* (man thinks and God laughs) or *fun al-khet vert men nit fet* (from the recitation of *al khet* [the confessional] one does not gain weight; 8.10).

Paronomasia is based on the juxtaposition of homonyms or near-homonyms that every language possesses. Because of its fusion character, the Yiddish language has possibly more homonyms (8.10.1), and to the Yiddish speaker with a love for punning it matters not through what leap of thought and with what linguistic material he achieves his effect. *Koymemies* means *oyfgeshtelterheyt* (erect), but since the verb *shteln zikh* (to rise to an erect position) can also mean 'to go bankrupt', this enables such a sentence in Mendele Moykher Sforim in which *zogn koymemies* is identified with 'declare bankruptcy': *tsen mol meg a soykher faln, zogn koymemies, shteyt er nishkoshe oyf un handlt vayter* (a merchant may fall ten times, declare himself bankrupt [erect], yet he rises and continues trading). Most frequently paronomasia is based on homophony. *Tomer iz geven a yidene* (perhaps was a woman) is based on the similarity of sound *tomer* (perhaps) and *tomer* (Tamar). *Ale meydlekh zenen kales* (all girls are frivolous) utilizes the similarity of sound between the two Yiddish words *kales* (frivolous) and *kales* (brides). *Koved* (honor) *vilstu* (you seek), *koved iz leber* (is liver) utilizes the same mechanism. The same may be found in the complaints of the yeshiva students about their *teg* (days): one is fed only *kashes* (porridge, but may also mean 'questions'); the other is even worse off since the women of the house always give him a *terets* (an excuse). *Kayen iz nit hevl* (the question of a livelihood must not be minimized) is constructed on a double pun; *kayen* (chewing) is similar in sound to the Yiddish pronunciation of Cain, and *hevl* (Abel) also means 'vanity'. In *hevl* both words are bound up with a Loshn-koydesh component, but in *kayen* two different components are represented. Similarly with the phrase *vayzn dem ferdl a hey in sider* (show the horse a *he* [the fifth letter] in the prayer book), the name of the letter of the alphabet is from the Loshn-koydesh component, the name of the food (hay) that the horse expects is from the German component. This free operation with the entire vocabulary of the language is characteristic of the run-of-the-mill Jews, who cannot readily distinguish between the Loshn-koydesh and the other determinants. The eminent scholar R. Ayzele Kharif was once asked why an ignorant person is called *grober yung* (literally, thick chap), to which he replied: *vayl er veyst nit kayn din* (because he does not know *din* [law, but also thin]). In sum, the puns of the Way of the SHaS take their material wherever available, without regard for the etymology of the words.

But the punster has at hand not only the various components of Yiddish. One element of the pun, and at times both, can be Loshn-koydesh per se, for in the culture system of the Way of the SHaS from the very beginning Ashkenaz has a second internal language, Loshn-koydesh (4.1 ff.). The Loshn-koydesh words and sentences are not intelligible to the same degree to every member of the community. To the typical ignoramus, who can only read a little *ivre* (elementary

Hebrew), but who does not understand it, the following reasoning is ascribed: *Oyb baagole iz a vogn, iz bizman koriv a shlitn* (if *baagole* is a wagon, then *bizman koriv* is a sled); *agole* (wagon) he knew from the Yiddish, the talmudic word *baagole* (speedily) was unknown to him. *Es vendt zikh vu der khamer shteyt* (it depends on where the *khamer* stands) (occasionally the following is added: "If in the stable, it is a donkey; if in the cellar, it is wine") is very popular, although *khamer* in the sense of 'wine' is not used in Yiddish except in this example. We have a similar linguistic combination in the description of a frivolous girl, "she has the *seykhl* of a priest's daughter"; here we have the Ashkenazic similarity in sound between *seykhl* (wit) and *seykheyl*—spelled *taw, heth, lamed*, of Leviticus 21:9 *uvat kohen ki tehel liznot* (and the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the harlot). *Moytse oder motse* (well- or ill-married) is a scholarly quibbling, based on a confrontation of two sentences: *motse ishe motse toyv* (whoso findeth a wife findeth a great good; Proverbs 18:22) and *umoytse ani es hoishe mar mimoves* (and I find more bitter than death the woman; Ecclesiastes 7:26). *Ale hoykers zenen krum, nor hoyker raglkho iz glaykh* (all *hoykers* [hunchbacked] are bent, but *hokar raglkha* [let thy foot be seldom (in thy neighbor's house); Proverbs 25:17] is straight) opposes a German-component word to a Loshn-koydesh phrase. *Yishoen al beyso* (he shall lean on his house), a scholarly euphemism for 'impotent', found in Rabenu Tam's Responsa, becomes intelligible through the other part of the sentence in Job 8:15.

Another mechanism could be designated *the ignoring of punctuation marks*. *Kol mum ra* is interpreted 'every cripple is mean', but in Deuteronomy 15:21 these words are only a qualifying phrase, not a sentence, and they mean 'any ill blemish whatsoever'. *Moyshe moyroshe* now has the same meaning as *roshe merushe*—'wicked' ("*Oy, sara moyshe moyroshe dos iz!*" [What a miserable creature!]), but apparently only because of the similarity of sound, for the Loshn-koydesh word *moyroshe* means 'heritage'. By ignoring the comma intonation in the sentence "*Toyre tsive lonu moyshe moyroshe kehilas yankev*" (Moses commanded us a law, an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob; Deuteronomy 33:4) a phrase was formed *moyshe moyroshe* (along the example of *moyshe rabeynu* [our master Moses]); it appears in the children's song *moyshe moyroshe oyf yener velt/ varf mir arop a zekele gelt* (*moyshe moyroshe* in the other world/ throw down a bag of money for me). Finally came the stage of *moyshe moyroshe = roshe merushe*. To the phrase (Psalms 2:2) "They blaspheme against the Lord, and against His anointed" there is the jesting addition *un oyf nenatke oykh* (and also against *ne'natke*). The humor consists in the fact that the word *nenatka* (let us break) is the beginning of the next sentence and is not related to the previous sentence. The saying *reb yankev meshalem* (the Jew pays) is based on "R. Jacob

[says]: he pays" (*Baba Kama* 39b). *Akhrey mos kdoyshim emor* is not even a sentence or near-sentence in Loshn-koydesh, but four separate words, the names of four consecutive weekly lections in the Torah, which coincidentally mean: 'After death say [about them, that they were] holy'—an analogy to the well-known Latin aphorism *de mortuis nil nisi bene* (about the dead nothing but good).

In other cases the effect of the pun is in reading into a word or words a patently humorous meaning. The first word in *ogil v'esmakh* (I will be glad and rejoice) sounds like *ogoyl* (round), hence the expression *ogil v'esmakh, kaylekhdik un shpitsekhdik* (round and pointed) 'excellent'. This is the kind of "tailors' interpretation" that became so popular through Sholem Aleichem's Tevye the Dairyman, but undoubtedly these are part of an old tradition. Here we need not necessarily deal with ignorance, ridiculed by scholars. Even Tevye, however slight his scholarship, certainly knew that the correct translation of *shloyshe dvorim* is not 'two words' but 'three words'; hence his *shloyshe dvorim-tsvey verter* (two words) is not a slip, but a deliberate mistake, intended humor. We are dealing here with jests of comparatively learned people who *imitate* the ignorant and thereby enjoy the exalted feeling that when the ignorant are ridiculed it is not they who are the butt of that ridicule, for such mistakes are impossible with them.

3.13.1 The basic difference between the above-cited facts and parody (which is also a play on words) consists in this: parody operates not with different interpretations of homophonous words, but seeks out words similar in sound but with an unexpected contrast in meaning to the underlying word. For instance, when *ponem-khaloshes* (a nauseating face) is used instead of *ponem-khadoshes* (newcomer) or *navenudnik* (bore) instead of *navenadnik* (wanderer), the word sounds close enough to the underlying word to be easily recognized, and the meaning of *khaloshes* (nausea) or *nudnik* (bore) gives the unexpected humorous effect. The same is achieved when someone is told to stipulate all conditions expressly, *berokhl bitkhe hanakete* (Rachel your daughter in the nude), instead of *berokhl bitkhe haktane* (Rachel thy younger daughter), as the Bible reads; the associations of the word *naket* (nude) break into the context with particular force. If one is in the habit of exclaiming *reboyne shel oylem!* (Lord of the World!) he may be mocked *reb yoyne shel oylem!* (R. Jonah of the world!); this may also serve to emphasize the triviality of the matter and does not call for the mention of God's name. *Olevashnobl* (*shnobl* [beak]) or *olevasholekhts* (*sholekhts* [peel]) may replace *olevasholem* (may he rest in peace) if the speaker thinks that the deceased is undeserving of the honorific.

Occasionally the parody is based not on a second lexical unit that is imposed on, but simply on a distortion of the original element. Instead

of *a khokhme!* (some joke!) one can say *a khomkhe!* (meaningless word) and thus the disparagement is even more evident. Similarly, *botsres* instead of *yotsres* (liturgical selections) or *rikrek* instead of *dikdek* (grammar) ("alas, what the Maskilim spend their time on!").

At times it seems that besides the pure joy of play of sound there is no motive for the parody; for instance, *ad kan oymer im bobe hodl* (up to here he says with grandmother Hodl) instead of *ad kan omrim beshabes hagodl* (thus far we read on the Sabbath preceding Passover) or *mirke, tsipke* (female names), *mume, vos makhstu?* (auntie, how are you?) instead of the names of the musical notations in the Bible *merkhe, tipkhe, munekh, esnakhte*. One ridicules, so to say, the parodied lexical units in their sound, not in their content; even in literary parodies it appears that one does not necessarily intend to disparage the parodied work. Usually it is otherwise; the content is attacked through the sound. *A gantser tane-bare!* is an ironic evaluation of a person pretending to scholarship, because *tane-bare* is a fictitious *tane* (teacher) not mentioned in the Mishna. The parody is achieved through *a gantser tane-bartek!*, for here the Polish name Bartek, that has a peasant connotation, is introduced; that is, 'he pretends to scholarship, but in reality he is a clod'. The aforementioned saying, *got zitst oybn un port untn* (God dwells on high and arranges matches below), also has another version, a parodistic one: *got zitst oybn un porket untn* (God dwells on high and tinkers below). Here we have explicitly a disparaging nuance, which may have been in the first version but at any rate was discreetly concealed.

Vu toyre, dort iz khokhme (where there is Torah, there is wisdom) is a direct emanation from the Way of the SHaS. But how can we explain the genesis of *vu toyre, dort iz krokhml* (where there is Torah, there is starch)? Starch per se is a useful thing, but it does not match Torah. Apparently a wit began to suspect someone's wisdom and concluded that his Torah too must be deficient (it is also possible that the parody derives from social criticism of the bearers of Torah in general; no historian of culture was present at the birth of the parody; 3.12).

In the case of parody, free rein is of course also given to all means that the language and language-relations provide. Internal bilingualism permits the partial substitution of Yiddish-language material in a Loshn-koydesh quotation; thus to the frequently cited and exalted passage (*Ethics of the Fathers* 2:6), "In a place where there are no men, strive to be a man," was added a parody: *bemokem sheeyn ish iz hering oykh a fish* (where there is no man, herring too is a fish). To describe two people, or two groups of people, between whom there is little difference, we occasionally use the words *elu veelu bzemer mezamrim* (both sing a song). To this there are two parodies, illustrating different techniques. *Elu veelu betentsl metantslim* transfers a grammatical pattern from the

Hebrew, which is also found in the Loshn-koydesh component of Yiddish, to the non-Loshn-koydesh components; for example, *loy fidalti, iz nit gefidlt* (roughly, "forget it!" *fidalti* is a German-component root with Hebrew grammatical form). A second wit, from the western Yiddish territory, recorded in Mattersdorf, Burgenland, utilized the similarity of lexical elements in the Hebrew material itself, and said facetiously: *elu veelu bzemer mamzerim* (*mamzerim* [bastards]).

The Talmud (*Berakhot* 17a) has both statements *sof odem lomus* (the end of man is to die) and *sof beheyme lishkhite* (the end of a beast is to be slaughtered). To this accrued two parodies: *sof ganef litliye* (the end of a thief is to be hanged) and *sof soykher lipleyte* (the end of a merchant is to go bankrupt). Another saying, aimed at merchants, although not mentioning them explicitly, is *hayem kan, mokher vayivrekh* (here today, gone tomorrow) instead of the talmudic saying (*Berakhot* 28b) *hayem kan, mokher bakeyver* (here today, tomorrow in the grave). Such reformulations were possible because so many members of the Yiddish-speaking community were familiar not only with the content of the Loshn-koydesh texts, but also with the meaning of the Loshn-koydesh words and the structure of the language.

3.14 Let us recapitulate. The secret of Ashkenazic flexibility, of the capacity to bear shocks and to constantly absorb new variants, is inherent in the initial pattern, which came into being as early as the talmudic period and, as a result of vertical legitimation, has remained alive in the Way of the SHaS. This flexibility stood Ashkenazic Jewry (more precisely, its largest part) in good stead in its most critical hour, a crisis frequently described by the name Haskalah. Actually the Haskalah was only one of the phases of a profound social upheaval, brought on by a process of worldwide historic dimension, the Industrial Revolution.

The Industrial Revolution in Europe proceeded from West to East, and the foundations of the Way of the SHaS in western Ashkenaz were shaken. Even the comparatively small communities in Holland, Germany, and Bohemia-Moravia were not just absorbed by the coterritorial population, as is sometimes naively assumed. Although western Yiddish began to wither toward the end of the eighteenth century, it can still be partly studied from living informants, more than one hundred years after it had been categorically pronounced dead (4.14, 9.17.1). In eastern Ashkenaz, however, the wheel turned otherwise than the Maskilim in their rationalistic unilinear thinking had anticipated. Their prognosis was: When civilization will reach eastern European Jews, they will also align themselves linguistically with their non-Jewish neighbors. In effect, the process of westernization touched various strata of Jews in eastern Europe in very different ways. It is irrelevant to apply

here the slogan "assimilation," as we see it in retrospect; and just at the time when the Yiddish language should have disappeared, according to the prognosis, it rose to an unforeseen height both in the number of speakers and in the fields of usage and potentialities of expression.

The most striking mark of the new Jewish society in eastern Europe is its socioeconomic differentiation. One must not accept at face value Mendele Moykher Sforim's polemically motivated formulation about the time *prior* to the great changes, that *kol yisroel eyn kaptsn* (all Israel is one pauper). No matter how, both rich and poor, high and low were evident. Culturally, too, the web was not entirely uniform; we may consider as forerunners of the secular sector the merchants journeying to the Leipzig fairs, the excise farmers, and the like as early as the end of the eighteenth century. But in the twentieth century the eastern European Jews constituted a society differentiated into distinct social strata, although with traits that had remained from precapitalistic modes of production. The details of the transformation have yet to be furnished by the historian, but there can be no doubt about the fact itself.

A concomitant of this transformation was the rise of a secular sector in the Jewish community. In the beginning it was a small one, but in the middle of the twentieth century it grew to such proportions as to reach a possible majority. At any rate it was more conspicuous, because it was more articulate. To express the proportion statistically is basically impossible, because not only did the traditional and the secular sectors coexist, but there were also many intermediary groupings. Sometimes they leaned in one direction, sometimes in the other, but frequently, as is the case with intermediary strata, they could not be assigned here or there.

The new literature in Yiddish and in Hebrew—the press, the theater, the political parties, the educational societies, the trade unions, the school systems, and the like—that sprang up as a result of the social differentiation, largely stood apart from the traditional mode of life, and some new patterns of thought and action were definitely westernized, had a definitely antitraditionalist focus. However, the rings holding the community did not break asunder. Occasionally it seemed close to it. Not only did Hassidim and Mitnagdim fight out of their separate conventicles; 3.9.1), but extreme Maskilim threatened that they came "to desecrate all holy things of Israel." Various parties, and at times factions within the same party, fought each other bitterly. In a workers' song there broke forth the line: "Messiah and Judaism both dead, a new Messiah is coming, the Jewish worker. . . ." On the other hand, the religious decried the "free ones" as "troublers of Israel." The result was that along with Torah Jews, Maskilim, nationalists, and socialists

all remained in the totality of Israel. A category of "non-religious Jews" became possible. Nobody knows its size, but undoubtedly it is large, whereas in traditional Ashkenaz the very concept, and hence the word *Orthodox*, did not exist (3.5). In the interbellum period Agudists, Mizrachists, Folkists, Zionists, Poale-Zionists, Bundists, Non-Partisans (all new terms for new concepts!) sat at one table in the Jewish communities in Poland. There were constant quarrels, but the people as a whole became welded more closely. The *oylemshe yidn* (this term that had its origin apparently sometime in the nineteenth century, designated not necessarily antitraditional Jews, but in general "the moderns") were accepted as another variant to the many variants that Ashkenaz had had from before. The amplitude of Jewish pluralism became still broader.

3.15 The entire language of the secular sector, and its retroaction on the language of the more traditional Jews, is related to the description of the New Yiddish period. One theme, however, belongs to the present chapter: how the language of the Way of the SHaS continues in the mouths of those who have turned aside from the Way of the SHaS, even in the mouths of those who reject this way.

The crucial matter here is the process of neutralization. Earlier (3.3.3 ff.) we have called this process extension of meaning—a general term used in semantics to indicate that another meaning or meanings were added to the original meaning of a lexical unit. Neutralization determines the direction of this extension: from a meaning directly related to Jewishness to another related to the world in general. Above we have analyzed the various translations of *(ha)moytse* (3.5). The same applies to *khale*. The word and the concept are found in the Pentateuch (*hallah*); there is the tractate *Hallah* in the Mishna; and in the Way of the SHaS the setting aside of *khale* (later to be burned) is one of the three special women's commandments. But now the largest number of Jews (and also non-Jews who eat this type of bread) associate *khale* only with the loaf of bread, and in the saying *di khale vet nit klekn oyf der hamoytse* (the *khale* will not suffice for the [blessing said whereupon it is cut into] slices) it is hard to say whether the direct connotations of Jewishness exist in the speaker's or hearer's consciousness. Possibly in a mild form, and possibly not at all; possibly in the consciousness of the speaker and not that of the hearer, and perhaps the reverse. At any rate, this saying, which initially has in it so many Jewishness connotations, can provide us with a moral even if interpreted generally: if the *khale* should be cut into too many slices, there would not be even a minimum for all.

This type of neutralization, as stated, could be possible all the way up to the rise of the secular sector—because the Way of the SHaS was

not only a religious way but a life system (3.5). Something new has been added with the appearance of the secular sector: instead of neutralization under given circumstances, in given contexts, a permanent *neutrality* can be found in part of the community. To the average Jew of the secular sector, unless he is interested in the history of language, even *afile* (even), *efsher* (perhaps), *gufe* (in person), *nishkoshe* (so-so), *stam* (ordinary), *kashe* (question), and so on are ordinary Yiddish words; he has to be told that they derive from the language of study (3.8.5). *An aveyre di tsayt* (it is a sin to spend the time on); *a mitsve oyf im* (it is a good deed that it happened to him); *host dos kosher fardint* (you have deserved it by right); *freg mikh bekheyrem* (ask me under oath) are to the modern Jew simply neutral Yiddish idioms that stir no religious associations, and we can readily conceive of a Yiddish speaker who has never seen the ceremony of *kapores* and who cannot describe it; nevertheless he may say that he needs a certain thing *oyf kapores* (for nothing).

Moreover, expressions initially specifically associated with Jewishness could become associated in parts of the secular sector with concepts distinctly non-Jewish. *Yontef* was initially a Jewish holiday (in a world where holidays are either Jewish or Christian, a distinction is made between *yontef* and *khoge* [non-Jewish holiday]; 3.3.3). *A shtikl khale iz bay im a gantser yontef* (a slice of *khale* is a real *yontef* for him) may be a linguistic product of the traditional sphere, and even *yontef* as a euphemism for 'menstruation' may be old, but entirely unrelated to the Emancipation. But later the Fourth of July became the *yontef* of American independence, the First of May the international *yontef* of the proletariat. *Mesires-nefesh* (self-sacrifice) was associated in the Jewish tradition only with Jewishness, but now people can manifest *mesires-nefesh* for various ideals. We know that for ideals one has to "make a sacrifice" (*brengen a korbn*) and we know of heroes who sacrificed their lives on the *mizbeyekh* (altar) of freedom. The Yiddish workers' literature of around 1900 speaks not only of the *martirer* (martyrs) but also of the *kdoyshim* (saints) of the Paris Commune (4.25.1.1).

The oneness of the Way of the SHaS, the fact that even the oppositionists were included within it, is demonstrated in the fact that the linguistic symbolism of the Hasmoneans and Bar-Kochba can be linked in Yiddish with Lekert, with the uprisings in the ghettos in World War II, with the struggle for the State of Israel. Language *can* pour new wine into old vessels. But this possibility is already the result of a consolidation process. Just as the coexistence of Hassidism and Mitnagdism under one roof had initially been regarded as impossible (3.9.1), so the first spokesmen of the secular sector saw mainly that which divided them from the community at large. They identified tradition with the narrow-mindedness of the *khakhmey lezhanke* (sages of the stove bench),

the *bank-kvetshers* (the bookworms), or the "bent backs" (*krume rukns*) or *patronen* (wards) who *vos esn teg un shlingen trern* (eat days and swallow tears) who can only *dreyen mitn grobn finger* (twist their thumbs in talmudic disputes), but who cannot think logically. In the case of the word *batlen* the meaning has turned over one hundred and eighty degrees. The Mishna (*Megillah* 1.3) asks: "What is a city?" and replies: "A place that has ten men of leisure (*batlanim*); below that number it is a village." These ten men are unemployed, devote their time to study, and the community maintains them so that they can be in the synagogue during services. A similar custom exists in the case of Hassidim in the rebbe's court, as novices can note in Peretz's (batlanim); *Goldene keyt* (*Golden Chain*). But today *batlen* means 'an impractical person, ignorant of the ways of the world, a nobody'.

The aversion to former conditions led to the casting of aspersions on traditional words even where they were seemingly handy. One hated *koolishe asifes* (communal meetings), the *khevres* (associations) with their *gaboim* (trustees); *gaboes* (trusteeship) became a derogatory term and a new universe of discourse was created with *efntlekhe farzamlungen* (open meetings) and *fareynen* (societies) and *farvaltungen* (administrations) and *tsuzamenforn* (conventions). The old-fashioned were ridiculed: *A yidns glik iz az er kumt tsu borkhe* (the luck of a Jew is when he arrives [in the synagogue] at *Borkhe*, that is, roughly in the middle of the prayers); *a yidish gevins iz der goyrl tsu kadish* (a Jewish prize is the winning ticket for kaddish [the recitation of the prayer for the dead]); *a yidisher taneg iz a kiler tishebov* (a Jewish pleasure is a cool *tishebov* [fast day in midsummer]). These witticisms that had formerly been apropos in given individual instances were now turned against the entire old mode of life: *vu toyre dort iz krokhml* (where there is Torah there is starch; 3.13.1) became with the moderns a taunt at all Torah Judaism: Alas, what kind of wisdom can it possess?!

The protesting, struggling minority is always more aggressive, but neither has the attacked majority remained silent. Temperately, the people of the new manner have been referred to as *naymoydishe* (new spinsterish), a parody on *naymodishe* (of the new fashion); *fraye* (the free); *oyfgeklerte* (the enlightened); *hayntveltike* (the moderns); *gebulbete* ("potatoed"), a parody on *gebildete* (educated). They go in for *kentenishn* (knowledge), that is, secular studies, it was said, for as soon as one becomes free (*vert fray*), one departs from the pious way. One also used the term *niskhamets vern* or *khometsdik vern* (turn sour), and the transgressors were labeled not merely as *treyfniakes* (consumers of nonkosher food) or *kolbasnikes* (consumers of nonkosher sausages), but they were also charged with eating *kheylev mit tshvekes* (tallow with nails) just to spite God.

But the Ashkenazic community in eastern Europe emerged strengthened even from these bitter fights, with which Jewish culture history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is replete, and the Yiddish language came out enriched. We have already mentioned the fact that people of the secular sector use, at times against their will, the idioms of the Way-of-the-SHaS tradition. In analyzing New Yiddish the reverse process can also be seen: how the traditional sector was influenced—also at times against its will—by the linguistic innovations coined by the secular sector, not merely in vocabulary, but also in grammar and syntax. The Yiddish standard language of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has synthesized the various Yiddish sociolects.

4
Internal Jewish Bilingualism

4.1 Ashkenazic Jews (just like other Jewish communities since the Diaspora) have always been a minority in a non-Jewish milieu; hence they always had to be bilingual; most members of the Jewish community had to know—some more, some less—besides their Jewish language, the language of the coterritorial majority (3.2). In those territories where the non-Jewish population itself was divided linguistically, Yiddish speakers had to know, to some extent, more than one non-Jewish language; for example, French and German in Alsace, Czech and German in Bohemia, Polish and Ukrainian in the Lvov district. Such a situation it is well to call external bilingualism (or multilingualism). It placed the Yiddish speaker in a specific sociopsychological position and also directly affected his language: its Slavic component, for instance, Yiddish owes to its vicinage with Slavic peoples. We certainly will not minimize this external bilingualism, either in its purely linguistic or in its sociopsychological aspects. Here we can find a direct relationship with the study of languages in contact, which is now a recognized field of the language sciences. The subject of this chapter, however, is bilingualism within the Jewish community, that is, the symbiosis of Yiddish and Loshn-koydesh throughout the entire history of Ashkenaz and the position of each of these languages in the cultural system of Ashkenazic Jewry.

On the basis of the analysis in previous chapters (mainly 2.5–2.8.1) we can tentatively divide the history of the Hebrew language into the following periods: (1) up to the Babylonian Exile (−587 B.C.E.), when Hebrew was the only language of the Jewish people; (2) from the return from Babylonia to the beginning of the predominance of Targumic as the vernacular in Palestine (±500–200 B.C.E.); (3) from the predominance of Targumic to the complete decline of Hebrew as a spoken language in Palestine (200 B.C.E.–300 C.E.); (4) Hebrew since the dominance of Targumic as a vernacular till Sepharad and Loter (300–800); (5) the traditional Hebrew or Loshn-koydesh (800–1750), with its two main versions: Sephardic and Ashkenazic (about the development in Ashkenaz itself; 4.25). As far as time and importance are concerned, Ashkenaz is mainly bound up with (5), and in order